

FEBRUARY, 1922

THE SIGN

A NATIONAL CATHOLIC MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Benedict XV.

In and Out of Umbria - - Louis H. Wetmore

My Master's House - - David S. Lawlor

The Broken Lure - - Matthew Kenan Carey

The Passion of Christ in Symbols - Hubert Cunningham

To The Face
of Christ
Sr. M. Benvenuta, O. P.

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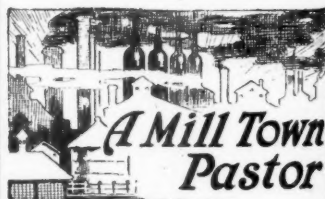
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A NATIONAL CATHOLIC
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VOL. I.

FEBRUARY, 1922

No. 7

BENEDICT XV.

ON January 22, Benedict XV. died, the 259th. successor in a direct line from St. Peter. His demise was quite sudden. Particularly did it seem so to us who recall the earnestness with which he addressed us on the quite recent occasion of the canonization of St. Gabriel and the animation with which he participated as the central figure in that splendid ceremony.

His was a short reign in that heroic line of Christ's Vicars—the first fifty of whom were every one a martyr. Yet who dare say that his predecessors defying the Neros, the Julians, the Henrys, had to exercise greater fortitude than he. Into his pontificate were crowded the years of unparalleled warfare and acrimonious readjustment.

Benedict's pontificate is reviewed with glowing sympathy and sincere gratitude by the press of all nations and by leaders of every creed. Belated credit is yielded to him for the best points for peace adopted in the Conference and for the most practical phrases echoed by Mr. Wilson. In the prospective the world marvels at the justice, firmness and impartiality with which he responded to the partisan pleas of his children throughout the world conflict. To the enormous strain all this entailed can reasonably be attributed his apparently premature demise. Briefly may it be said of him that he measured up fully to the ideal the world has formed of the Holy See as the most potent and far-reaching influence in civilization.

While most of the encomiums dwelt upon his useful life we must be grateful to God for the rare edification the Holy Father imparted to us all in his last hours—his oblation of himself to secure peace for the world, his ardent yearning for the fortifying rites and sacraments of the Church, the consolation he found in the presence of the sacred mysteries. Thus is a writer in the *WASHINGTON HERALD* inspired to say: "The last hours of Benedict were quite exquisite in the sense that they were delicately beautiful, quite what we like to imagine and so seldom find in reality.

"He was himself the first to realize that he had but a little way to go and that his race was nearly run. And he was not afraid that it was so. He looked out into the unknown as some tired traveler coming to the crest of a hill who admires the grandeur of an inspiring valley spreading out before him. The years rolled back and he was content as when a boy he dreamed of greatness in the pleasant meadows and hills of his home land.

"He was neither afraid nor unwilling, and took the last sacrament of the Church while conscious. His regret, if any, was expressed in his last words, 'Peace, peace, I would willingly give my life for the peace of the world.' He did."

In and Out of Umbria

A Franciscan Pilgrimage

BY LOUIS H. WETMORE

I APOLOGIZE at the commencement of this article—if it can be called an article—to whomsoever among its readers is offended by its lack of form, its tendency to meander and its lack of purpose. I am altogether in agreement with the offended reader. As a literary critic I am for the balance and proportion in writing, for an artistic presentation of the data of a pilgrimage, and I attempt to achieve these things when I write. But in this case there is no use in attempting the impossible. It is impossible in this pseudo-article, because I have in my mind an impression of Umbria that is neither balanced nor proportioned; I have but an impressionistic memory of things seen, vague changes of scene and points of view which take no definite outline and which make it extremely difficult to give a clear impression of my Franciscan pilgrimage. I am depressed, and have a feeling that an unkind critic will arise and say that all that I write is but an unpleasant mist arising from the ditch of my egoism; in other words that I think things important simply because I have seen them, and not because they are really important of themselves. Perhaps this critic would be right. Yet I am sure that I have some things to describe which are of vast significance however inadequately I may describe them. If I can only begin.....

Umbria is Italian but primarily Franciscan land. Seven hundred years have passed, yet the ghost of the Little Grey Man still haunts the streets of Assisi, and wanders through that country of blue skies and the grey sheen of olive trees, of gayly colored frescoed churches and bleak grey hermitages.

The tale of Francis needs no repeating here. The life of the *Poverello* of Assisi is well known to all true Catholics. Nor is it untrue to say that above all other Catholic saints Francis has caught the imagination and love of Protestants. Protestants have misunderstood and perverted the life and ideals of Assisi's foremost citizen; but they love him. And that is much. There are tales to be gathered in Umbria of strange conversions among Protestant travellers, even among those who flit through that beautiful province with the rapidity typical of Cook's Tourists. Take Joannes Jorgensen, the great Danish convert, as an example. The life

of the Little Poor Man of Assisi plays havoc with the smug piety and muscular Christianity of modern Protestantism. Protestant intellectual pride has bowed low before his tomb in San Francesco on the hill, or in the garden of roses at Our Lady of the Angels below in the valley.

IT is related in that exquisite book, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, that one of the earliest acts of the Saint after his conversion to godly living, was to perform penance for past sins by rebuilding with his own hands a chapel near Assisi which had fallen into disrepair. This chapel was of Saint Damian. The priest of that little church rejoiced in the aid given him; and in turn gave food and shelter to him who labored for the resurrection of God's fallen house. So Francis worked for many days, collecting the materials for his building throughout his city and the surrounding country.

Day by day in the rags of his poverty Francis walked through the city's streets singing his song after the manner of the troubadours:

Who will give stones for the building of St. Damian's?

Who gives one stone shall have one reward;
Who gives two stones shall have two rewards;
Who gives three stones shall have three rewards.

The townsfolk ran to hear him. It was such an odd sight to see Francis Bernardone, the Beau Brummel of his town, once clothed in fashion, now in beggar's rags. Many jeered; some threw stones at him in anger; others gave him stones in charity. Thus he returned to Saint Damian's heavily laden.

With the aid of the first disciples and friendly neighbors the walls of the church rose again and a roof again kept the rain from God's altar. Francis would stand by the roadside when human aid was lacking, and cry to the passers-by: "Help us with your aid, good people. For the chapel of San Damiano will one of these days be a church for holy women whose lives will be given for the glory of God."

Now this was a prophecy; because not so long after the place became the first convent of Poor

THE † SIGN

Clares, who by prayer and fasting aided God's Church and the Order of Friars Minor.

SAN DAMIANO exists to-day almost as it did in Francis's life-time. This little place is the real cradle of the Franciscan Order. Reverent hands have kept it in repair. No false restoration has played havoc with its simplicity. A wee place this convent, no longer that of Poor Clares, who have moved to the larger convent of Santa Chiara on the hill above, but a convent of the Friars Minor of the strict observance.

I have made two pilgrimages to Assisi. It is a medieval city to-day. Houses and churches are of the medieval time. The ruined castle on the highest

of the Assisian hills crowns the ancient walls and houses of a city scarcely changed since the 13th century. But there is nothing that so "medievalizes" one in this peaceful Umbrian village on the hills, than to hear the quiet of a street broken by the tap of a

friar's sandals, and to see some son of Francis bearing his basket in hand or on head, begging the community's bread from door to door. Success does not always crown the friar's begging. Not all doors in Assisi open to give the mendicant food. I have seen him met here with scowls, there with curses. At other doors, the good man (so very brown; brown habit, brown legs, bare brown arms, tanned face, and long brown beard) will meet with more success. Here he will secure a crust of bread, there a half loaf of the bread of yesterday or perhaps of the day before that. A window will open and someone tosses a piece of corn into the filling basket. But the basket is never filled. I have never seen it more than a quarter full when he, dear son of a blessed father, strode back to San Damiano to carry the day's food to his brethren. And that kind of thing goes on day by day in Assisi, in rain as well as in fair weather. Each day the community

at Saint Damian's is fed with the scraps from the poor man's table. At times they have enough to eat. At other times they have not enough to eat. But at all times the Friars praise God for His gifts.

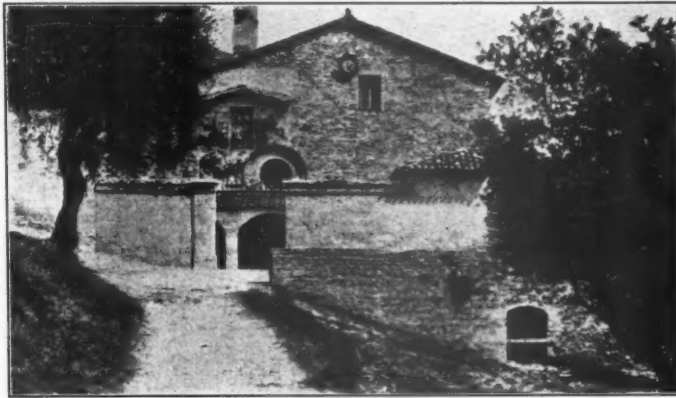
When I visited San Damiano, I was welcomed with Franciscan simplicity. A portly friar (how did he achieve it on the husks?) would talk in a deep bass when he spoke Italian, and in a high falsetto when he spoke English (such English!), acted as my guide. He was a gentleman of leisure that morning, having the by no means arduous duty of spending the morning in my company showing me the convent. At least I hope he did not find the duty arduous. Certainly he seemed much amused at me, and laughed a great deal, confessing, as we got to know

each other better, that he thought Americans "very queer people."

These Americans were always in such a hurry. And did Americans ever say their prayers? He didn't think they did, because he had taken many of them through the convent, and

left them alone in the chapel for a few moments of devotion; and when he came back he always found them hopping around the place like grasshoppers. They were never still! Now the Italians were different. Once they got on their knees in the chapel, or even in the refectory, one simply had to drag them away by the scruff of their necks and bustle them outdoors again. Or else no work would ever be done at San Domiano. But he supposed most Americans were heretical dogs—why was this? And his blue eyes twinkled, and he laughed and chattered on like a magpie, happy in the possession of a Catholic *Americano* who would laugh with him and let him do the talking, and who (wonder of wonders!) had a real Catholic devotion for the Blessed Father.

THE chapel of the convent is small and dimly lighted. Nor did I find many of the relics



SAN DAMIANO
Showing Window From Which St. Clare Routed the Saracens

THE † SIGN

which I had hoped to find there. They still have, however, the bell with which St. Clare was in the habit of calling the Sisters to prayer, and her breviary, written in the small, clear handwriting of Brother Leo. And choicest of all the relics, the tabernacle made of alabaster in which Clare carried the Host the day when she held it aloft over the Saracens, who were besieging her city, and drove them back in confusion and terror.

Once at San Damiano there was kept a precious ring of St. Clare's. But in 1615 a Spanish Franciscan vicar-general came to visit the convent with his secretary. This gentleman had a great reverence for all relics of the Seraphic Mother and a great devotion to her memory. The good Fathers took particular pains to let him see all that they had, and to linger over them as long as he wished. He left much satisfied with their kindness and hospitality. But, alas, the next time that the relics were shown to a visitor, it was found that the ring was missing. There was anger and a miniature riot in the convent, and a great disturbance in the city when the news of the theft got abroad. Angry letters were sent after the Spanish father on whom suspicion had fallen. He would not affirm that he had taken the ring, nor would he deny that he had taken it. All that he would condescend to say was that the ring was now on its

way to Spain, and that it would be well taken care of there. The Friars of San Damiano still regret the visit of that Spanish Vicar-general.



A FRANCISCAN HERMITAGE ON MT. SUBASIO

on page 7 gives a far better picture of this choir than I could give in many paragraphs of descriptive writing. A plain, bare place with white-washed walls and with worm-eaten stalls against the walls. A rickety lectern stands in the center. Here it was that Francis hid from the wrath of his father, while the irate parent searched for him throughout the city.

From here one mounts a flight of crazy stairs to the little oratory of the Seraphic Mother, which connects with her cell, and where at her request the Blessed Sacrament was reserved during her last illness. This is all of the convent that women can see. The rest, since the day when the generous convert

Lord Ripon, ex-viceroy of India, bought the convent from the Italian government and restored it to its rightful owners, is "clausura." Even the refectory, that bare, bleak dining hall with its fading frescoes,



THE REFECTORY AT SAN DAMIANO

BY going through the little chapel of the Crucified, where God wrought the great miracle of the crucifix of Brother Innocenzo, painting the crucifix Himself while the artist brother slept, one enters the choir of St. Clare. The photograph printed

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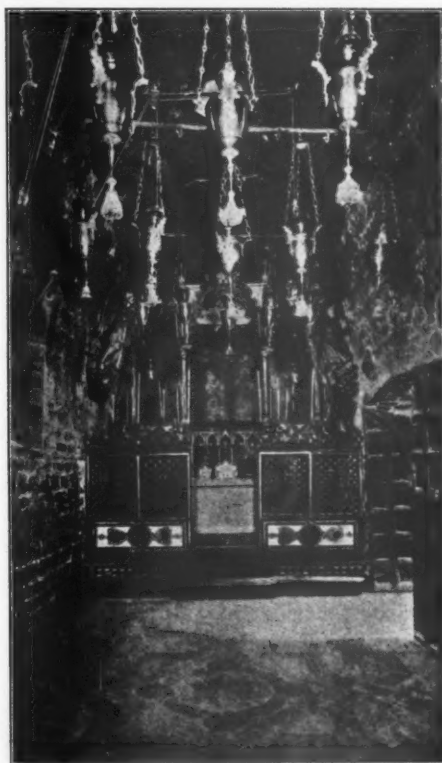
where His Holiness Innocent IV witnessed the miracle of the loaves, is shut off from feminine eyes. For not the first time in my life I thanked God that I was not a woman! I saw the refectory.

On a level with Clare's oratory is, perhaps, the loveliest sight in the entire convent. Out of her oratory extends a small but dainty garden where, traditions tells us, the Saint used to take her daily exercise, looking over the broad Umbrian valley and at Montefalco across the way, while she tended the flowers she loved so dearly. Even to this day the friars still garden a row of them in her memory.

The differences of the whole Catholic world are in Assisi. There is the poverty of San Damiano and on the hill above the splendor of the great church of San Francesco. In that great basilica, in the lower church, sombre with great pillars and lighted but with lamps and the colors of the frescoed walls, is the shrine of *Il Poverello*. How strange the splendor of his last resting place against which he would have protested so energetically had he anticipated the translation of his body!

The story of the burial of Francis is a commentary on the loss of pristine poverty in the Order in the very first years of its existence. Other Orders have decayed in the process of centuries, but their first years at least have been founded on the example and the teachings of their originators. Yet hardly was Francis dead when the Franciscan world was plunged into disorder and schism. Elias, Francis' dearest spiritual son, one of the first disciples, and apparently his devoted follower, seized control of the Order soon after the Saint's death. The prayers of Francis that Elias would follow closely in his footsteps were not answered for many years to come. Elias, the Franciscan, vowed to poverty, installed himself in palatial state as General

of the Order. His table groaned under luxuries; his stable befitted the rank of a great baron; his servants were without number. Vain it was for the remnant of the Saint's personal disciples to protest. Poor Brother Giles (was it not?) was scourged by order of Elias for his protests against the General's luxurious life. Other primitive followers of the Saint, who remained faithful to Lady Poverty, were driven into exile or into the hermitages of the Umbrian hills; there to weep over the follies of Elias and the destruction of the Order.



INTERIOR OF THE PORTIUNCULA, NEAR ASSISI

SAN DAMIANO and the hermitages of the hills were not for Elias. The Franciscan churches must reign with the splendor of basilicas. The Founder himself must acknowledge the power and value of earthly glory and riches! So Elias conceived in his fertile brain the idea of the translation of the body of the Saint from its first humble burial place to a great church that would dominate the town of Assisi from the Hill of Paradise. The story of the basilica of San Francesco is the story of Elias' ambitions writ in stone.

In order to imitate the humiliations of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth, St. Francis had chosen as his burial place the "Infernal Hill," at that time lying outside the city limits. There great criminals were put to death and buried. After his death his sacred remains were taken to the convent of San Damiano, then inhabited by the Poor Clares. There Clare, her sister Agnes, and the Sisters rejoiced at the sight of the miraculous stigmata. The wound in Francis' side was like a beautiful rose; the nails in his hands and his feet were externally black, internally yellow; they could be moved to and fro, but not separated from the flesh. St. Clare wished to preserve one of the nails as a precious relic of the Founder, but could not

THE † SIGN

detach it from his hand. The body was then carried to St. George's Hospital; this was on October 5th, 1226. On July 16th, 1228, Pope Gregory IX canonized Francis Bernardone.

The day after the canonization, the Pope went in great pomp to the "Infernal Hill," the place which Francis had himself chosen as his final resting place, and now renamed the "Hill of Paradise" by Papal edict. Here Gregory laid the corner stone of the great church that Elias had decided to build over the body of Francis. He had resolved that while Francis might have his wish of lying in the polluted ground of the Infernal Hill, he would rest by Elias' order under a magnificent shrine set in a jeweled church, and not in a malefactors' potters' field.

When the crypt of San Francesco was finished, Elias determined to translate the body thither. A solemn (but sham) translation took place on May 28th, 1230. Sham, because the Master General, fearing a physical protest of the Primitives, who fought furiously against this perversion of the Founder's wishes, had resolved to anticipate such a protest should it occur, by himself in secret burying the body three days before the sham translation took place. The fiery opposition faded away for the moment; only for the moment, for a few years later it burst into flame at a General Council of the Order in Rome, and hurled Elias from his throne into schism and ignominy at the court of the excommunicated Emperor Frederick. But in the meantime the body of Francis had faded away also. Elias had buried the body deep in rock under the crypt, and no one knew the place of the burial. It was not till December 12th, 1818, that it was discovered.

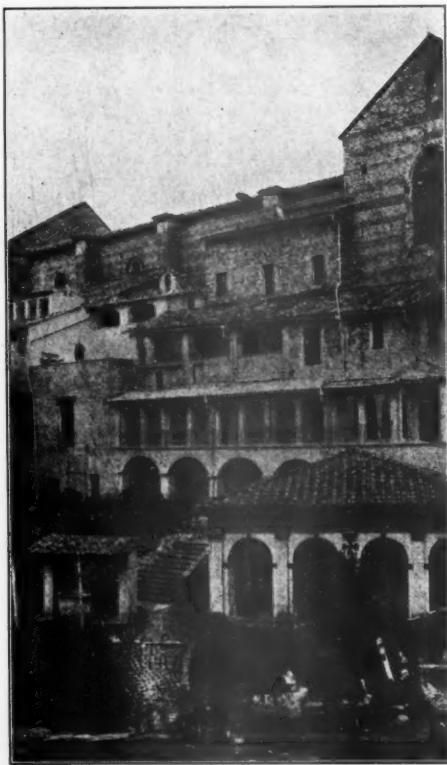
HAVING San Francesco happy in the possession of its Giottoesque beauties, ripe with

colored walls and molten splendor of gold, one wanders through narrow streets into a dim, cold church, where no sunshine ever seems to penetrate, and where only the chapel of the miraculous crucifix which spoke to Francis, adds a little color to the sombreness of its surroundings.

In front of the High Altar a flight of marble stairs descends into a dark and gloomy crypt. Here Clare following even in death the example of her

spiritual father, had been buried; and so deep in rock likewise that her remains were not discovered until excavations were undertaken in 1850. Five bishops, including Cardinal Pecci, afterwards Pope Leo XIII, were present at the opening of her sepulchre. The iron bands which bound the coffin were filed through. Clare was discovered clad in her brown habit, as though but buried yesterday. The wild thyme, which devoted hands had scattered on her body, though withered, was still fragrant; and a few green leaves still clung to her veil. Spontaneously a procession was organized in honor of the Saint; and the following Sunday amid pealing of the bells of all the Assisian churches high Mass was sung with great crowds in attendance. Bishops, priests, confraternities of lay men and women, bands of children, who scattered flowers as they

walked, filed through the narrow streets of the town into the church to pay honor to the beloved Saint. Feasants from the countryside, held in check by Austrian soldiers, crowded round the body to pay homage to Mother Clare. First to the Cathedral, then to the great basilica of San Francesco, "that the body of Clare might salute the body of her great master," a procession wound in and out of the torturous ways of the city, finally back to Santa Chiara, where anxious nuns awaited the return of the Foundress of their Order. Clare's body rested



WITHIN THE CLOISTER OF ST. CHIARA
*Chapel where St. Clare's body was first laid

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awhile in the Chapel of San Giorgio, until the completion of a shrine of precious marbles and alabasters in the crypt of the church.

REELING my way from pillar to pillar through this dim crypt, I crept to pay reverence to her whom Francis loved. I hesitated a moment, hearing what seemed to me like the rustle of a nun's dress. Then a curtain drifted away in front of me, and I was face to face with Clare. Behind a great pane of glass, in a glass case, lying on a satin bed in her brown habit, with the Book of the Rule in one hand and in the other holding a lily set with small diamonds, lay she who had conquered both the world and heaven. I knelt in quiet reverence. There was complete silence save for the click of rosary beads as they passed through the nun's fingers. Clare lay quietly on her couch, as though asleep; her features as perfect as in life, save that the skin seemed browned with the passing centuries. I rose reluctantly, and as I turned to bid farewell to the Seraphic Mother, the curtain rustled into place and I was left in the exterior darkness, to find my way alone into the upper church and the light of the sunshine of Umbria.

From the piazza in front of Santa Chiara one looks over the broad valley and sees a mound in the center of the plain, seeming at first sight but a gray hillock of bare rock. Gradually one determines that this hillock is in reality a building with a dome, a dome of large size which dominates the Umbrian valley as the dome of St. Peter's, in Rome, dominates the Campagna. Descending the hillside, and finding one's way by dusty roads through fields of grass and grey groups of olive trees, one comes after an hour's thirsty walking to the piazza of Santa Maria degli Angeli (Our Lady of the Angels). This square in front of the great church used to be under

special Papal rule, and the part outside the west front was a Palace of Refuge and enjoyed the right of asylum for criminals who sought safety from arrest. It was forbidden, under pain of excommunication, to erect a building within two hundred yards of the Basilica. The buildings with the colonnade on the Piazza were formerly a great guest-house for women pilgrims to the shrine, while male pilgrims were received in the monastery itself.

In 1860 the Piedmontese government confiscated this Church land; so the former hostelry for ladies no longer shelters pilgrims; it is the home of the local tax collector and the village doctor.

THE Portiuncula, which Santa Maria degli Angeli shelters under her dome, was the great shrine of the Franciscans after the death of Francis in 1228; but it was not till 1569 that the great basilica was begun. The basilica owes its origin to the Great Dominican, Pope Pius V, inspired with a great love for Our Lady of the Angels and the Order of Friars Minor.

One pushes aside the mattress (what else can one call it?) that closes all church doors in Italy. One's thoughts are not for the splendor of the great church, but for that small building in the center of the nave,

under the cupola which rises above it like a royal robe. The little church set within another church, as a jewel within a casket, is the Mother Church of the Order. This gem of holy poverty was built in the midst of a forest in the time of Pope Liberius (352-357) by four hermits from the Holy Land, who placed therein a relic from the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin; for which reason the little church was first called "Our Lady of Josaphat." The name in common use, however, was and is that of "St. Mary of Portiuncula," or *little portion*; a name dear to St. Francis who loved to think of the spot as the



ST. CLARE'S CHOIR AT SAN DAMIANO

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little portion which God had from all eternity assigned to him.

In the 6th. century the sanctuary passed to St. Benedict, who restored it. It was here, toward the end of the 12th. century, that the noble lady Pica became the mother of Francis; on the night when angels sang in the Portiuncula, and Francis was born in a stable. Francis, after he had restored San Damiano (of which I have already spoken) repaired the ruins of this shrine, and here received the grace of his vocation. Dom Pietro, Abbot of the Benedictines of Monte Subasio, gave the shrine to Francis and his followers. And there is a pretty story in the Franciscan legend which tells how Francis in gratitude for his noble gift, sent each year to the Benedictines a basket of fish (if any fish were caught that year in the river!) and they in turn sent him a bottle of olive oil as a sign of goodwill and friendship.

The Portiuncula measures but $21\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length by about 13 feet, 3 inches, in width. 'Tis a wee holy place.

Here also Francis died, and the birds, as St. Bonaventura relates, "left their nests after sunset at the death of the Saint and perched on the roof of the little house to say a last farewell to their friend."

The Portiuncula is covered with some ancient and many modern frescoes of the German romantic school. These are not impressive. But inside the chapel over the altar, is an admirable statue of St. Francis by Luca della Robbia from a cast taken after the Saint's death. St. Francis' cord with its three knots, on which can be seen drops of blood from his stigmata, is reverently kept in a small cupboard which originally contained the Saint's medicines. On the outer wall of the cell is the lid of Francis' coffin. The great pillar which stands in front marks the spot where Francis met Clare and gave her permission to leave San Damiano for a short time that she might visit the Portiuncula, where she said farewell to the world.

IN a wood close to this holy spot, Francis built a hut, in which he generally lived. One cold winter night, being tempted by the devil to limit his austerities, the Saint threw himself naked among the thorns of nearby briars. Instantly these changed into thornless rose bushes, and their leaves have since been marked with spots of blood, which can be seen to this day, dull red spots on verdant

green. These roses bloom only in the month of May, but the leaves are preserved by the guardians of the shrine, and each pilgrim thither can receive a few to carry home as a memento of his pilgrimage. The rose garden, where once nothing grew but thorns and briars, can still be seen in a little cloister of the monastery. Opposite the thornless rose-bushes the Friars have planted a small figtree, in memory of one now dead on which Brother Grasshopper came to sing to Francis.

In the Chapel of the Roses near at hand, Francis lived in a hut at the time of the famous "Chapter of the Mats," when five thousand religious gathered about his little house in tents. Here it was that Francis met Dominic and Antony of Padua. The brethren told me that here at times a delicious perfume could be traced. But, I must confess, though I sniffed violently, I could smell nothing but onions cooking in a nearby kitchen.

Three miles from the town of Assisi, on Monte Subasio, is the Carceri, one of those hermitages round which the early Franciscans gathered before a fixed rule penned them in monasteries. This hermitage Francis kept as something outside his daily life. Here he held isolated communion with his Maker. Here he retired to rest and to gather strength for his arduous work among the children of men.

As in the case of the Portiuncula, so likewise was the Carceri given to Francis by the Benedictines. The principle monastery of the Benedictines in the 11th. century stood on the top of Monte Subasio. The Mount was Benedictine ground. Slowly through the centuries the Monks have ebbed away, and the Friars have usurped their dominion. For those of the Benedictine Order who wearied of the full monastic life, below their monastery, and a little to the west thereof, lay the Carceri, where in rude caverns these Benedictine cavemen sought solitude with God. The great walls and columns of what was once the most celebrated monastery in Umbria have crumbled into wreckage, and until a few years ago, when some attempts at restoration and preservation were made, the ruins were open to the birds of the air and the wild creatures of the mountain.

The hermitage of the Carceri was but huge caverns cut out of the solid rock, with huts scattered throughout a deep mountain gorge. The caverns can still be seen, though ivy has grown thick across the entrances. None go there now to pray.

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The road from Assisi to the Carceri passes for the first mile through rich corn fields and groves of olive trees. Soon it changes to a mere mountain track. Here the colors of the Judas tree, here a few flowers alone break the arid monotony of the sun-burnt rocks. Looking back along the road that leads to Assisi, one sees below miniature forests of oak and olive. Where we now are, on the crest of the mountain, is a new type of Franciscan land. The sunlight wavers over the city below, picking out in rose-colored splendor the town's old walls, the basilicas and churches, the ancient castle set in ruined pride.

HALF mile more, and one enters a narrow gorge. Nothing in sight but an ilex tree and an arched doorway leading into a courtyard. A few steps further on and one comes to a cluster of cells hung from the bare rocks, as though threatening to topple into the ravine. Through a doorway a friar enters the scene. Noting us as strangers, he beckons and as we join him, plunges at once into tales of every cell, and shrine, and tree and rock. In this cave lived Brother This, and in that cave Brother That; while this cavern was once occupied by the great Bishop of So-and-so-opolis in *partibus infidelium*. These caves are the original Franciscan convents: one man to each monastery. Here lived the early poverty-loved brethren of the Order, in rooms scooped out of rock and with a piece of wood for their pillows. Nearby is a small

oratory, and here is preserved the crucifix which the Saint always used. The doors are so small that one must stoop to enter.

The little monastery where the twentieth century Franciscans live is but a grotto; the rooms thereof have for walls the naked rock, full of holes and untouched by chisel. The rude ladder which leads to the friars' dormitory is perilous to life in its extreme shakiness. It would be well to commend one's soul earnestly to God before making the ascent. The refectory is but an excavation made in the rock with a table by one solid wall. Here six religious could eat comfortably; here twelve eat uncomfortably. The common room is blacked with the smoke that pours forth from the one fireplace in the monastery. If you spend a night herein, gentle reader, you will derive much spiritual consolation; but you will find no temporal comforts.

In a small wooden cupboard in the chapel, according to an inventory made some two hundred years ago, were preserved many precious relics. The wooden pillow of St. Francis and a piece of the Golden Gate by which Our Lord entered Jerusalem are still there. But the hair of Our Lady, and some of the earth out of which God created Adam are no longer to be found.!

Reader: "I am getting very bored with this article. Is the end near at hand?"

Author: "It is finished!"

A Smile

NICHOLAS WARD, C. P.

A little thing, a sunny smile,

A loving word at morn;

And all day long the sun shone bright,

And cares of life were made more light

And the sweetest hopes were born.

My Master's House

A Wholesome Talk to Sign Readers.

DAVID S. LAWLOR

WHEN the average observant man has passed the half hundreth milestone in life, he has learned many things which would interest, instruct and be of value to those who have not travelled so far along life's highway. How true is Joyce Kilmer's simple poem:

"It's said that Life is a highway
And its milestones are the years
With here and there a toll-gate
Where we pay our way with tears.

It's a long road and a hard road
That stretches broad and far
But at the end lies a golden town
Where golden houses are."

In this great highway we meet many people as we journey on. Sage and singer, saint and sinner, poet and peasant, the strong and the weak, the proud and the humble, all hastening on to "a golden town where golden houses are." I have journeyed on with many of these in many places in this great country of ours, and from many of them I have learned of things that were a help to me. Some of these I will speak of in this article.

I, like many others who have traveled far, have seen wonderful things, but you have only to look about you to see the same wonderful things,—the sky, the sea, the hill, the valley, the grass, the trees, the birds and the flowers. "Nature," says the weakling. "God!", cries out the strong man who has been given the light to see Who is behind all these truly wonderful things. Niagara, Grand Canyon, the Rocky Mountains and the myriad of marvelous things He put here for the pleasure of man. The glory of His handmaiden, Nature, is everywhere,

and it seems to me that when we have passed many of the milestones there comes to us a broader understanding so that we see Him everywhere and a prayer of gratitude often swells from the heart to the lips.

NOW often when plucking a flower have I thought of the beautiful tribute of that gifted Irishman, Canon Sheehan:

"Who made you, little one, who made you are so lovely and so frail? In what garden of Eden did He behold your prototypes? Or was it from the secret of His Own surpassing beauty He divined your loveliness and made you another and a

meeker manifestation of that undying principle that underlies any operation of His handmaiden, Nature,—the principle that all things round to beauty, and that, in the spiral of a vast nebula which covers half the heavens, and

in the curve of a little leaf that shelters a tiny insect, order, and beauty, and proportion, and harmony subsist—a reflex of the Mind of The Eternal."

This is to be a heart to heart talk with you the readers of *The Sign* on certain things in life that are worth while.

If I can help you to be abler and stronger men and women; if I can show you how to overcome many of the things that are doing you harm and show you how to strengthen the many things that will do you good; if I can point out and warn you against the road that will lead to trouble and pain; and set you on the road that will lead you to health and happiness and peace of mind then I have

THIS is not a sermon. It is a heart-to-heart talk of the Author with our readers. The sage counsel here given has been learned in the school of long and varied experience. Mr. Lawlor is a man of the world in the best acceptance of the term. He is an expert in business promotion and commercial publicity. For a number of years he was prominently associated with the Editorial and Business Departments of several of the leading newspapers in the Eastern States. As a lecturer on religious and commercial subjects he is in much demand. Mr. Lawlor is President of the Laymen's Retreat Guild, Brighton, Mass.—EDITORS.

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delivered to you some of the wisdom I have gathered from the many I have met on life's highway.

I believe that it will be of help to many of you. I do not say all because I have in mind the gospel that tells of the sower that went out to sow his seed:

"And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden down and the birds of the air ate it up. And some fell on the rock, and as soon as it had sprung up it withered away because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns, growing up with it, choked it. And some fell on the ground, and sprang up and yielded fruit one hundred fold."

WONDERFUL are the works of man. He has circumnavigated the globe; traced great rivers to their sources; climbed the highest mountains; discovered the two great poles; measured the distance to the stars and weighed the sun, but no man has yet lived who has been able to circumnavigate man. Today man is as much a mystery as he was in the beginning, and he is as little understood. It would seem as though the work of the Infinite Mind was beyond the understanding of the finite mind.

In my prayer book is a little prayer at Communion, "Lord prepare my mansion to receive Thee."

Well and good! Where do you live? What kind of a house do you live in and where is it situated? How is your home furnished, and what kind of a man is the master of the house you live in? Is your home on an alley, or on an avenue? Is it a cottage, neat and attractive on a country road, or is it some abode going to wrack and ruin in some evil neighborhood?

I hope it is a mansion on a broad avenue, the house surrounded by noble specimens of the forest; flowers and plants here and there that show the owner's love for the beautiful.

In such a house I expect to find the rooms large and high studded, the furnishings rich and in good taste, beautiful paintings on the wall, a library well stocked with the choicest literature of the ages.

I expect to find an atmosphere of rest, of comfort and of peace; and, when the master comes, to find a man who has the air of a master, with mind and bearing denoting to the manner born. There is will on the throne directing events, and it is will correlated to pure thoughts and high ideals.

Any of you may have such a home as I have described. The body is the home; the broad avenue is the atmosphere the thoughts occupy; the magnificent trees are the good resolutions that have been made and kept; the flowers are the beautiful deeds done in life; the dwelling place with its great rooms is the broadness of vision; the oil paintings are the beautiful thoughts that come with right living, and the well stocked library is the mind that has been refreshed by contact with the great minds of the centuries. Surely such a home is desirable, and is worth any effort that it may cost.

YOUR body is the mansion in which reside the heart, the mind and the soul. You have been taught from infancy the care of this body. It is well worth your care. Nature demands it be cared for, and punishes severely any injury to it. Respect your bodies, for usually with a clean body goes a clean mind. I do not mean the soil that comes from honest toil, but the stain that comes from excesses and debaucheries that soil not only the body, but which leaves their impress on the mind and the soul.

I might liken the body to a ship; the mind to the rudder of the ship that gives it direction; the will to the captain, who directs the course; the conscience, to the charts which show the channels through which the ship may sail in safety, and mark the rocks and the shoals upon which there is danger of wreck and destruction. Let us very briefly examine the growth of this mentality which gives us character.

"Our body began as a speck of vitalized protoplasm that developed in dark and in secret," says Dr. Openheim. "It came into the world with a cry of pain, and then began the struggle of life; and with the growth of the body came the growth of the mind, less easily seen, but still developing from time to time.

"This development of the body continues for a certain length of time until maturity arrives, the time for active work. Then growth ceases, and an even level of strength is kept up until middle life when the physical resources begin to decline. Slowly weakness creeps on, and each year man finds himself less able to withstand the wear and tear. Thus old age arrives, and with a cry of pain and a sigh of resignation we go to our reward.

"The mind during all this time does not keep up an even space in its progression; it differs from the

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body in being more influenced by environment than by heredity. The brain starts out as a fluid whose final crystalized form is the forces that have been working upon it, good and bad, wise and unwise. These forces are influencing it each day, each hour. There is the same struggle between influences as there is between animals in the primeval lands or trees in the forests. Those that are naturally strong and have most favorable environments grow briskly, and those that are less favorably placed die out. We are totally unconscious of being a battlefield where one sort of victory or another must be decided."

HS those things which so closely influence our lives are vital to us, let us pause and examine them. Heredity is not of our choice. Our fathers and mothers are thrust upon us, as we have no choice in the selection. Probably we could not make as good a choice as Nature did for us. This, strange to say, has but very little influence on our lives; at least, so the best authorities declare. The great moulder of our character is environment, and the greatest of environments is the home circle, the outlook of life that is given to us by our fathers and mothers, and our home surroundings.

Environment is more than the family circle, more than the neighborhood in which we live. Environment means association; the chums we associate with; the books we read, the schools we attend; the pictures we see, and the thousand things that come into our daily life. It is said that the mind takes fifty thousand impressions a day. See to it, we should, that these pictures are clean, inspiring and elevating, if we would have a mind that would guide us right, a mind that will be a source of joy and pleasure to us, and to all whom we come in contact with, a mind that will give a fragrance to

our whole being. Such a mind is a jewel beyond price.

How is such a mind to be developed? By discipline, by drill, mental drill much like bodily drill. You witnessed a few years ago many young men from your neighborhood taken in the draft, round-shouldered, narrow-chested boys. They were sent to the cantonments; and you have seen them some months afterwards, their carriage erect, their chests broad and their shoulders square. Physically they were better men. What made this change? Drill, drill, everlasting drill.

The mind may be drilled much the same way, but there must be the will to do it, and that will must come from within. It cannot come from without. An internal treatment or influence must stir it into life. We must keep it awakened by constant exercise, and such exercise will win health and vigor for our will. When we have done this, we will recognize within us a new force capable of achieving much. Usually that means that we have a new possession in our mind from which to work and develop aright and draw forth untold riches.

To the Face of Christ

Illuminet vultum suum super nos—

—terra dedit fructum suum. Ps. LXVI

Rise upon the wheat-fields of my soul,

Sun that bearest healing in Thy wings.

Every ear, made full and fair and whole,

Shall adore Thee when the west wind sings,

And Thine altars be the single goal

For the fine flour of my harvestings.

SISTER MARY BENVENUTA, O. P.

EVERY good, healthy concern from time to time takes stock, and every good healthy man should take stock of himself every so often to find out his weaknesses and correct them before they have become a habit; to see what his virtues are that he may encourage them to even a greater growth. The value of these introspections is worth while. A good physician will never prescribe unless he knows what is the ailment. There is first the diagnosis and then the treatment. Let us find out in what we are deficient; then bring up our forces and supply the deficiency.

Do you swear? Stop it. Once a salesman told me that he would give anything to give up the evil. For twenty years he had been swearing

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many times a day. I asked him why he did not stop it, and he said that he could not. I told him that he would cure himself if only he would follow my advice; first make the resolution to stop swearing; second write a memo each day as follows: "I promise that I will not swear today, and if by chance I do swear, I will immediately write out this same promise." He did so. He told me that the method was wonderful, as the second day he was cured.

Have you a bad temper? Then cure it. Professor James says that the way to cure a bad temper is to deny it expression, and then it dies a natural death.

A strong passion may be subdued by refusing it freedom of action. Habits are made and grow stronger by repeated acts; they become impotent, or are made weaker by constant denial. Men who have gone deeply into the science of the mind say that the set teeth and the clinched hands are not symptoms but the cause of anger. When you are tempted to be angry, instead of letting the corners of the mouth droop, just smile, and the sunshine from that smile will dissolve the angry feeling just as ice dissolves from the warmth of the sun.

As to the habit of drink, I will quote from Dr. E. Boyd Barrett: "Suffice it to say that it poisons the blood, and that the blood is no longer able to nourish the nerve tissues. As a consequence the healthiness and capacity for work of the inebriate diminish. Just as vigorous health, full pure-blooded fitness, is the optional condition for making volitional effort, so the nervous debility consequent on intoxication is the worst possible condition for such effort making. He may think and his friends may think that he could, if he tried, give up drink, but when things have gone so far it is all but impossible. Only extraordinary circumstances and the help of God's grace can then save him.

"It is in presence of such considerations that Professor James writes as follows: 'The hell to be endured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters in the wrong way. Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while it is in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone.' "

I KNEW a man once who had gone into the gutter through drink. He lost his job, his friends and his money. He came back, and he has stayed back all this time—and that was more than twenty-five years ago.

"How did you do it, Ned?" I asked. "I resolved to cut it out; then made a vow that I would not only cut it out, but would cut out every place where it was sold, and cut out of my life every man who drinks liquor." That was his answer.

This man, by the grace of God, used the same method as is advised by the Church after the accumulated wisdom of nearly 2,000 years—shun the occasion, shun the place and shun the companionship.

The sick wills have been divided into eight classes, all amenable to treatment. There are the hesitating, the impulsive, the inactive, the "I can't," the over-active and the emotional will, and the over-practical and the indefinite will.

If you are impatient and hot headed, and go off at half-cock, try Dr. Barrett's treatment for such a case. Each action ought to be done once a day for ten days and occupy ten *minutes* in the doing; and, at the end of each exercise, one is to write each day his introspection—

1. To replace in a box very slowly and deliberately one hundred matches.
2. To write out very slowly and carefully the words, "I will train my will."
3. To turn over very slowly and deliberately all the leaves in a book, about 200 pages.
4. To watch the movements of the second hand of the clock or watch, and pronounce some word slowly at the completion of each minute.

There are many other exercises, each of them drilling the will much as the drill sergeant makes over the bodies of our boys in army cantonments.

The great object of self-discipline is, in reality, to brace the human will for the strengthening of the moral life.

The education of the will must not be left to fate, nor can it be left to others. It must be carried out by ourselves. It must be carried out in accordance with the knowledge we can ourselves acquire of our individual self. Study, introspection, and

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self-discipline must then go hand in hand. Effort and patience are the price to be paid. There is no mystery, there is no short cut; the goal to each is self-mastery, personal power and force of character. The way is long, the way is hard, but the goal is worth the winning.

FIVE rules are given by Dr. Barrett, which we ought all make part of our lives:—

1. We must make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy.
2. In the acquisition of a new habit or the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided initiative as possible.
3. Never suffer an exception to occur until the new habit is securely rooted in life.
4. Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain.
5. Keep the faculties of effort alive in you by little gratuitous exercises every day.

Here then is given you a plan to build, decorate and furnish your Master's house. You can build it on any scale and make it as beautiful as your heart desires.

In it you can have many of the treasures of the world that will always be a source of joy to you. You are the master of your own fate. You can build as you desire, but you must pay the price in work. You cannot pay for it with a smile or by check.

Work, work, work! It was decreed that we must win by the sweat of our brow, but oh, the joy that comes from honest, well directed effort! Nature royally treats her children who rigidly observe her laws. To them she gives health, strength and power. Our place has been called "the garden of life," and it has been said by an unknown poet:—

"Beautiful thoughts make beautiful lives,
For every word and deed
Lies in the thought that prompts it
As the flower lies in the seed.

Back of each action lay the thought
We nourished until it grew
Into a work, or into a deed,
That marked our life work through.

Gracious words and kindly ways,
Deeds that are high and true;
Slanderous words and hasty words
And deeds we bitterly rue.
The garden of life, it beareth well;
It will repay our care,
But the blossom must always and ever be
Like the seed we're planting there."

The Blue Laws

THE legislation which certain zealots are attempting to foist upon the community affecting really harmless diversions and indulgences had for precedent the Blue Laws of Connecticut. Even as now these early legislators made religion odious by claiming its sanction for their astounding prohibitions. Judge of the weirdness of their legislation from what is here quoted.

No one shall be a freeman or have a vote unless he is converted and a member of one of the churches allowed in this dominion.

No food or lodging shall be offered to a heretic.

No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep houses, cut hair or shave on the Sabbath day.

No one shall cross a river on the Sabbath but authorized clergymen.

No one shall kiss his or her children on the Sabbath or feasting days.

Whoever wears clothes trimmed with gold, silver or bone or lace above one shilling per yard shall be presented to the grand jurors and the selection shall tax the estate £300.

Whoever brings cards and dice into the dominion shall pay a fine of £15.

No one shall eat mince pies, dance, play cards or play any instrument of music except the drum, trumpet or jewsharp.

No Gospel minister shall join people in marriage. The magistrate may join them, as he may do it with less scandal to Christ's church.

When parents refuse their children convenient marriages, the magistrate shall determine the point.

A man who strikes his wife shall be fined £10.

A woman who strikes her husband shall be punished as the law directs.

No man shall court a maid in person or by letter without the consent of her parents; £5 penalty for the first offence, £10 for the second and for the third imprisonment during the pleasure of the Court.

Saints and Sinners

LUIS COLOMA, S. J.

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Chapter 4

WHEN Luis reached home, it was already dark and the house was lighted brilliantly. The boy's troubles had vanished in that rapid transformation of mood which in childhood quickly changes one emotion into another. Impatience was the emotion which moved him at the moment and a longing for praise from father and mother as he threw himself into their arms, and those of Lili, that dearest of little sisters.

While entering Madrid they wasted ten precious minutes lighting the carriage lamps, and the custom officers delayed them at the city gates to register everything in the carriage. How aggravating these men were! And then, as they turned the corner of the University, a carriage got in their way. After that a large van. So another precious three minutes was lost. At last the boy reached the street; and his hands were on the door eager to open it; maybe his father or mother or Lili, perhaps all three, were waiting for him watching from some balcony. But the balconies were empty and there was no one in sight. Hugging his prizes the boy ran up the steps of the vestibule. There was a strange figure at the entrance, walking backwards and forwards with arms behind his back. This was a hideous dwarf, a fitting rival of that famous Roby who was presented to the King of Saxony in a venison pie. He was but three feet in height, though perfectly proportioned, dressed carefully in evening attire. His name was Don Joselito, and he received the munificent wage of seven thousand reals, with no other duty than that of announcing visitors and of increasing that reputation of Curra for oddity which she aimed to possess in everything.

The dwarf bowed respectfully to the lad and told him that the Countess had retired a half hour ago with a bad headache. The boy's eyes suggested tears; and savagely turning his back on the dwarf, he ran to his father's apartment. Villamelon was reclining in an armchair discussing some mysterious matter with one of the ministers of the government. Luis ran to his father and threw his arms about his neck, kissing him twice.

"Ah, little man!" cried Villamelon. "You back already?"

Then seeing that the boy was bashfully presenting him with his prizes, he said without taking them: "Well, well! Prizes! I am very much pleased. Take this—er—and tell German to take you to the theatre this evening."

Giving the child fifty cents, he turned round again to the Minister and continued the mysterious

conversation. His eyes wide-open, the boy stood perfectly still for a moment. Then he swung round on one foot, and with face red as a pomegranate, walked toward a table covered with knick-knacks. Underneath this was a curious Japanese figure with wide-open mouth, into which he threw the money his father had given him. Running hastily out of the drawing-room, he stopped for a meditative second behind the curtains of the door, and then with arms hanging by his side and with bowed head, he slowly went back down the long hall which lead to the nursery.

In the corridor there was a sound of a piano considerably out of tune. Yet the music sounded to the child like music of heaven. His depression vanished, and joyfully he began to run in the direction of the music.

"Lili!"

"Luis!"

A beautiful girl of nine years jumped down from the piano stool and threw herself into the boy's open arms. Their kisses, their joy, their laughter mingled with the confusion of their golden curls surrounding both their heads like sun's rays in a auriole.

Soon the boy remembered the prizes.

"Look—look!"

Lili opened wide eyes. "Uy!" she said.

"I have five and two excellents."

"Please let me have one, Luis."

"Silly-billy! These are to be framed, not given away. Look! This one is for mathematics, and this one for—"

He stopped. A dry hand appeared from behind the curtains, then a sharp shoulder, and finally a red face as English as Bass Ale or Huntley's biscuits.

"Mademoiselle!" cried Lili frightened.

The dry hand seized Lili by the arm and pulled her behind the curtains, while a metallic voice was heard saying: How's this, Miss? You should be practicing your piano lesson until eight o'clock."

The lad flew headlong to the nursery and flung himself down on his little white bed with the desperation of a suicide who hurls himself without hope into a dark abyss. At last sleep, the sole consoler of unhappy children, brought his sobs to an end and restrained his tears. He slept as he was, still dressed, with his prizes in his hands. . . .

MEANWHILE Villamelon was engaged in conversation with the Minister. The Marquis was forty years of age and his face showed

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the effects of the ravages of time. His nose was red and pimply, his hollow cheeks showed prominent bones, while his stomach developed a pronounced arch, creating that caricature of youth which appears in those who age before their time. His figure had once been graceful, and still possessed some signs of elegance, but his countenance resembled that of the dwarf of Philip IV in Velasquez's famous painting. He had a similar hooked nose, the same twirled mustache, the same large and thoughtful forehead, save that Villamelon parted his few locks in the center with a backward stroke that formed two little horns of hair over the ears. This massive forehead, which brought to mind the famous saying of the fox to the bust: "Your head is handsome but without brains," possessed magnificent attributes, especially at the moment when he bent toward his Excellency Don John Anthony Martin, Minister of the Interior, and said: "You are deceived, Don Martin: Dr. Wood is all wrong. You cannot prove to me that rat pie is better than squirrel pie. You understand me, do you not?"

His Excellency Don Martin's gesture did not indicate whether he understood or not. From the time this unfortunate man had arrived at the great tables of the Court after years of eating at a peasant's table, he had passed through graphic phases of indigestion, and had begun to feel a desire for the garlic soups of his earlier years. What terrible pains he had suffered from that *pate-de-foie-gras* last Friday at the Palace! What indigestion he had endured after that *crou a la creme* which he had eaten two days before at the French Embassy! For a brief moment he had imagined that he had been poisoned; and from that time held fast to Addison's saying; that whenever he saw fashionable tables loaded with luxuries from all corners of the world, he also saw gout, dropsy and lethargy hidden under every napkin.

"You'll see, Martin, when I'll have both kinds of pie served next Thursday without saying which is which. We'll see which is declared the best. Do you understand, Martin? Pardon me for believing that I can count on your Excellency's vote?"

His Excellency's hair stood on end at the thought of an attack of indigestion founded on rat pie.

"All this," continued Villamelon, "is that English eccentricity which totally ruins their cuisine. You understand me, Martin? In cooking, the French are ahead of all others. You can't deny that, Martin. The English devour, the Germans gorge, the Italians eat, the Spaniards nourish themselves, but the French alone enjoy: there's the point, Martin—to enjoy eating. Do you understand me?"

DON MARTIN did not understand, but took offense at all these "Martins" and "do you understands." He hastened to reply in an exasperated manner: "What do you mean, Marquis? To enjoy or to burst?"

"No, no, no—Martin. That is a prejudice of yours. You understand me? Man is a weak, frail being who can barely support eight meals per day. But indigestion does not come from eating too much. It comes from eating badly. Give me a first class cook and I can show you the way to perfect health. In Paris, Prince Orloff, the Russian Ambassador, held a public competition to select a cook. I was on the jury. We tested one hundred and forty dishes before coming to a decision. No, no, Martin. Eating too much does not give indigestion. As my blessed mother used to say: 'Stomach full: praise be to God!'"

And he adopted a pompous air over the quotation; for it was one of Villamelon's little tricks frequently to mention his mother, always calling her blessed, and putting in that feminine mouth odd sayings, many of them in exceedingly bad taste, such as the one just mentioned.

At this moment John Velarde and the Duke of Bringas, having finished their game of billiards, entered the room. Shortly after their arrival, a servant announced that the Countess would be unable to attend dinner, having already had a *consomme* in her room and had retired for the night with a bad headache.

This announcement did not have the effect of upsetting the lady's husband or the Duke of Bringas; but the Minister of the Interior showed that it had a bad effect on him; and forcibly brought the idea to one's mind that the absence of Curra had completely upset the plan which had originally brought him to the house. As Butron had feared, the appointment of the first lady-in-waiting was causing complications. John Velarde also seemed disturbed. During dinner he ate little, and talked even less.

Villamelon passed through his usual phases at dinner; at the beginning of the meal completely engrossed in the important business before him; then toward the middle of dinner growing more affable, though still staid and circumspect; at desert, gay filled with charity toward all, as though his dinner had loosed in him a stream of affability which he never possessed while fasting. This was the time to request favors with a certainty of their being granted. It was also the time when he gave way to an unpleasant habit, of which neither his blessed mother nor his dear wife had ever been able to break him, of making little balls of bread and shooting them with delicate aim at his guests, with signs of affectionate regard and merriment. . . .

Meanwhile had an inquisitive imp lifted the roof off the Countess Curra's boudoir, he would have revealed an odd scene. Curra, seated at a low desk lighted by a lamp in the hand of a life-size statue of a negro with grinning white teeth, was completely absorbed in an elaborate caligraphic study, while a smile vague yet cunning flitted over her face. In her large clear handwriting she was writing on a sheet of paper: "What a strange animal man is!"

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Then with clever facility she was copying the phrase in different manners of handwriting. The phrase multiplied itself, sometimes written in small letters, at other times in large, firm outlines. Curra continued this odd employment for half an hour with all the attention of a child laboriously copying a school exercise, or of a forger trying to falsify a signature.

She finally seemed satisfied with the result, and in a small, constrained handwriting, that in no way resembled her own, wrote a letter on a sheet of plain notepaper. The letter was not long. On the envelope was written:

To His Excellency the Civil Governor of Madrid.

CURRA went into her bedroom and at the end of some fifteen minutes reappeared completely transformed. She had changed her beautiful street gown for a plain black wool skirt and an old mantilla which partly hid her face. She carried a lighted candle and a large key. Picking up the letter, she left the room. Just then a distant clock struck half past eleven.

Villamelon's house was one of those ancient houses with long halls, large drawing-rooms and spacious apartments, surrounded by small corridors and private stairways for the use of servants. Curra's apartment communicated with such a long private passage way. This ended in a narrow stairway which led down to a small garden. She descended these stairs, and walked toward a gate leading into the street with an assurance that showed clearly that this was not the first of her nocturnal adventures.

It was dark and the little plaza on which the gate opened was lighted with only a few dim lanterns. All was dark and deserted. The haughty Countess, who so seldom left her carriage to walk in the dust of which she was made, passed along these dark streets, crossed many roads, deserted at this late hour, and finally arrived at the little square of St. Dominic. Passing through this, she sought the shelter of la Costanilla de los Angeles. With a wide circuit she passed the rear of the Ministry of the Interior, and came to the Calle de las Carretas. There she posted the mysterious letter. If this lady was a criminal, she was a very careful and practical criminal, who saw in every possible onlooker a road that might lead to prison.

She then started on her journey homewards, passing through the dark streets by which she had come. On the way she met with but one interruption. An old man of decent appearance suddenly stopped in front of her. He had mistaken her for one of those unfortunate creatures who extend thin hands for charity to passers-by in the small hours of the morning.

So at last the Countess thought. She took the money which the man offered her overcome with a frantic desire to laugh in his face, yet not hesitating

to profane with her corrupt lips that beautiful answer which Faith gives to her Sister Charity through the mouths of the poor: "May God reward you!"

When she returned to her boudoir, it had a strange and sinister appearance. The lamp in the hand of the negro was flickering out, and his teeth of white marble showed in the darkness with the smile of some devil amusing himself in the regions of Hell.

Three hours later, screams of terror came from the other side of the house. It was Luis, who had awakened in the nursery, numbed and terrified in the darkness of the early dawn, deserted by father and mother, and the seventeen servants engaged in their employ.

CHAPTER V.

THE Countess Curra laughed heartily the following day when her son Luis told her of his uncanny adventure of the night before, when, finding himself alone and fully dressed on his bed in the nursery, he had commenced to scream frantically for help. Magdalena, Lili's nurse, had heard his cries and came to calm him, sitting by his little white bed until he fell asleep again. The story produced in Curra one of those spasms of maternal love which attacked her in her moments of despondency. During these brief spells of maternal affection, she would haunt the nursery, playing with the children, buying them costly toys, and amusing herself making fun of the English governess; also reviling the good Fathers of the College, destroying in these raids on the nursery all the good which, with much labor, these had sown in the hearts of the two children.

Her hailstorm of kisses and pettings always effaced from Lili's mind the memory of previous periods of neglect, but these miniature tempests of affection did not effect the boy. In a corner of his small heart an unfailing memory gathered a list of the insults and tortures he had endured. As yet he pardoned his mother's hypocrisies, though he could not entirely forget them.

However, it was not a fit of despondency which brought Curra to the nursery that morning. She seemed preoccupied and restless. Lili had a happy inspiration. She asked her mother to have Luis photographed with his prizes. But the boy grew red, and refused emphatically.

"Why, of course you shall!" cried the Countess. "And this very second. German, tell the Marquis we are coming up to his gallery to be photographed."

"No, no; not Papa!" cried Luis.

"Why not?" cried Curra, grasping his arm.

The child pulled himself away. "He told me to go away. He gave me two pesetas," said the child, crimson and much affected, hiding his head on his mother's breast.

Little did Curra understand. She saw in the

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boy but childish caprice, and with jokes and caresses, tried to persuade him to have his picture taken. He yielded finally, and with the two children following her, Curra went up to the splendid apartment where the Marquis of Villamelon spent his many idle moments driving dullness and care away by experimenting in the art of photography. To eat, sleep and photograph everything that passed before the lens of his cameras were the sole occupations of the man whose ancestors had played such a great part in the making of Spain.

VILLAMELON hastened, as usual, to comply with Curra's request. He began without loss of time to prepare his camera, his fingers stained with nitrate of silver. Curra meanwhile prepared the children in an artistic group, seating them on a gothic settee looking earnestly at the boy's prizes.

"Splendid!" she cried. "Look, Ferdinand; it is like one of...."

She hesitated, for the door opened and a servant announced that the Minister of the Interior was below and very anxious to see the Countess at once. She turned suddenly on her husband, who looked up, frightened, the black cloth which he was using to focus the camera remaining on his head. Curra walked a few steps toward her husband, the anger in her bright eyes corresponding oddly with the soft voice and deliberate tone with which she asked: "Did that ox dine here yesterday?"

"He is a beast," and to hide his fright, Villamelon again disappeared under the black cloth, playing at adjusting his camera.

"Listen to me, Ferdinand, when I am talking to you."

Villamelon straightened himself from beneath the black cloth even more embarrassed.

"Did the Minister say anything last evening about the appointment?"

"Nothing," stammered Villamelon.

"Are you sure?"

Villamelon's lips trembled like those of a child who was trying to tell a lie. Then, as though thinking better of it, he thought that the ox of a Minister had told him that rat pie was very indigestible. A lot of foolishness! On the other hand, the Minister had told John Velarde that he was going to stop people making fun of the Government, and that he intended to force Curra to accept the appointment as first lady-in-waiting, supporting himself with a letter with which—and this Villamelon thought most impolite—he had threatened to rub Curra's nose.

"A letter?" exclaimed Curra, really surprised. "From whom?"

"From me! From me!" stammered Villamelon.

Curra advanced toward him, and with her voice growing softer as she grew more and more angry: "And so you wrote to him, Ferdinand?"

Villamelon bowed his head, overcome with terror.

"And after I told you only to speak to him about it? After I warned you that nothing must be written? You see, Ferdinand—"

Villamelon retreated as Curra advanced. "And he said that he was going to present this letter to me and use it over me as a whip?"

"So Velarde said."

"You are sure?"

"Absolutely sure."

Again Villamelon retreated, as Curra came nearer, repeating in a voice so soft that it seemed but a caress: "You see, you see, Ferdinand?"

And suddenly jerking the black cloth, she completely enveloped the head of her illustrious husband in its folds. Turning her back on him, as he struggled to free himself, she walked composedly out of the room. Lili shrieked with laughter at her father vainly struggling to fight his way out of the bag, running to Luis to whisper a great secret in his ear: "What a goose Papa is!"

THE butler was surprised to hear Curra, in passing, give him the order to light a large fire in the boudoir. It was well on in June, and the heat was already intense. But he obeyed without question; and when His Excellency the Minister of the Interior, Don John Anthony Martin, came into the room, he found a huge fire burning in the grate, while Curra reclined nearby on a lounge, covered with a large Scotch plaid, and wearing a silk satin morning-wrapper. Holding out her hand as he entered, she said in the weak voice of an invalid: "How are you, Don Martin? You are the only person I would have received to-day."

The visitor growled, a sure sign with him that he was startled, and, glued to the spot, began to perspire at the sight of the fire.

"But what is this, Countess? You are still suffering from that headache?"

"I am indeed unfortunate," replied Curra. "I am afraid that I have chills and fever."

She shivered as though with cold, and pointed out a chair for the Minister, near the fire and within reach of her hand. Martin seated himself cautiously, prepared to be roasted like St. Lawrence on his gridiron.

"I am very sorry," he said; and recollecting the rustic remedies of his childhood, he added: "Why don't you put two little potato plasters on your forehead? An excellent remedy!"

"Potatoes!" exclaimed Curra. "What an idea, Martin! I prefer the headache."

Curra settled her head comfortably on a cushion, regarding Martin, who settled his glasses on his nose after this interchange of civilities, and menacing the lady with a fat finger, said to her: "They are very angry at the palace."

Curra shrugged her pretty shoulders. "Why tell me this?"

"Why you? Madame, the King and Queen are very much displeased."

"But what, my dear Martin, have I to do with their feelings?"

"What have you to do?" cried the Minister, suffocating from the intense heat and exasperated at Curra's calmness. "Does it mean nothing to you to ask for the position of first lady-in-waiting and then toss it lightly aside after it is offered to you? Can one play with a Queen like that? You might as well know now that the Government has decided to force you to accept the position you requested."

And the Minister, red and perspiring, and with both hands firmly fixed on his fat knees, glowered at Curra as though he would swallow her in one mouthful. His intensity of expression did not terrify the lady. She casually raised herself, and much astonished, not to say offended, commenced in her aggrieved voice: "But, Martin, don't get so excited. You look positively ugly. There must be a mistake somewhere. I, first lady-in-waiting to the Queen! Where did you ever hear that nonsense?"

"From yourself, from yourself!" cried the Minister. "You don't dare deny that you asked before the minister of Ultramar for the post of first lady-in-waiting, provided that John Velarde became secretary to the King, and that you received six thousand dollars."

"But I do deny it and emphatically," cried Curra.

"Well, we will see if your husband can deny it, then, when all the papers in Madrid publish this letter." And Don Martin took a letter out of an inside pocket. He unfolded it in front of Curra carefully, and when she made a quick attempt to snatch at it, held it back, saying brutally: "Don't worry! I hold fast to this. But you shall hear me read it from beginning to end."

With spectacles on nose, for he was near-sighted, the Minister began. In it Villamelon in conjunction with his wife asked for the position of first lady-in-waiting for that lady, under the two conditions just mentioned by Martin—the private secretaryship for Velarde, and six thousand dollars for the lady herself.

This was conclusive proof, and Curra now understood all her husband's folly in letting such a request get into writing. She did not seem effected, however. As the Minister continued reading, she gradually raised herself higher on the pillows, with faint cries of protest; and then, suddenly, with the quickness of a cat, she grabbed the dangerous letter from the Minister's hands and threw it into the fire. In an instant the paper was but ashes.

The Minister fell back into his seat with an oath, while Curra sank softly amid her cushions, as if nothing had happened, saying with her hard little laugh:

"Well, well, Martin! You must really put two little potato plasters on. They are most refreshing!"

THE porter at the door of Villamelon's house received a tremendous fright the day following Don Martin's visit to Curra. At ten in the morning he was peacefully cleaning the antique seats in the hall when a group of suspicious looking individuals suddenly broke into the house. The porter, terrified, slammed the glass door in their faces, but a few terrific blows shattered two of its heraldic and decorated panes. Balthasar fled up the stairs, falling over the dwarf Joselito who was carefully polishing the metallic rods which kept the carpet on the stairs in place. The dwarf fled also, screaming at the top of his voice. Before long the seventeen servants were all rushing hither and thither, opening and shutting doors, and alarming the entire household.

Meanwhile the invaders reached a deserted antechamber, and the leader of the party began to knock on the floor with his stick and to demand the Countess of Albornoz in the King's name. The leader was the chief of police, who had come in the name of the Civil Governor of the city to search the house, and to seize all of Curra's papers for purposes of inspection by the authorities. His companions stationed themselves so as to guard all the exits from the house, leaving the doors open, however, so that anyone who desired might enter.

Villamelon was still sleeping peacefully. But Curra, contrary to her usual custom, had been up early, as though she was expecting something to happen. She at once noticed the tumult, and though pale, kept her head under the riot around her. All exits being carefully guarded, she instructed a page to scale a wall behind the house, and to notify the Marquis of Butron as to what had occurred.

Villamelon's awakening was appalling. He was ready to die of fright. He attributed this invasion of the police to the letter which he had written to the government requesting Curra's appointment as first lady-in-waiting. Curra had prophesied the day before that something unpleasant would result from that incautious letter. Here was something unpleasant. Shivering with fright, he tucked himself firmly under the bed-clothes; and all of Curra's demands that he go downstairs and receive the police availed nothing. He pleaded that he had a desperate cold, and that he would have a spasm if he ventured into a draught. Curra had started all this business. Let her extricate herself as best she could.

SO it was finally Curra herself who descended with haughty mien to interview the invaders. She demanded of the chief of police the search warrant of the Governor legalized by a judge, which alone permitted such an invasion. The chief of police politely handed it to her, and after reading it she tore it violently in half. She then made a furious protest, in which she emphatically stated

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her Alfonsist sympathies, and sending a flunkey to escort the invaders through the house, she retired to the billiard room, where she sat in queenly state among her maids, clinging to Lili and Luis, who had been brought to her.

The news of the invasion had spread rapidly through the Court, and thence to the cafes and plazas. A crowd gathered outside the house, awaiting developments, and watching with stupid gaze the long line of carriages which drew up in front of the door, while ladies and gentlemen passed rapidly in and out. The former arrived *en deshabille*, fluttering around Curra with exclamations of horror, surprise, enthusiasm and pity. This is exactly what Curra had planned. With eyes raised to heaven and with the air of a resigned victim, she gave graphic accounts of the invasion. What would become of her poor children? Here was Ferdinand prostrated in bed, and his health needing every attention! The ladies shuddered over Curra's misfortune, all talking at once, attempting outwardly to comfort the unfortunate lady, though inwardly cursing that Curra and not themselves were under the suspicion of the police, a suspicion which had lifted her to the pinnacles of celebrity at a single bound.

Several reporters arrived, and received full information about the event from Curra's own lips. Leopoldina Pastor burst in out of breath, carrying an enormous prayerbook in her hand. She had just arrived from Mass, for she had been making a novena to St. Paschal to beg of heaven to send a stroke of apoplexy upon Don Salustiano de Olozaga. She expressed amazement that Curra had not thrown the chief of police out of the window. She made a great fuss, sticking her tongue out at the police

agents who entered the room, pushing her way through the crowd, and finally retired into the dining room, for it was now nearly twelve o'clock. She was very hungry, had had nothing to eat, and she could not, of course, leave her dear Curra until this lamentable registration was over. Many followed her into the dining room eager to fall on whatever provisions the house could provide.

TO the astonishment of everyone, who was standing in a corner of the room but the dying Marquis, leaning over a sideboard, swallowing hastily a cup of steaming chocolate, hands crammed with buttered toast, as he gazed in all directions, terrified. Having recovered from his first fright, and not hearing any further disturbance in the house, he had suddenly remembered that he was extremely hungry. He called loudly for someone to bring him his breakfast. No one came to answer to his call. Villamelon, preferring any death to death by starvation, at last decided to get up and to slip by private passageways to the kitchen in search of his daily bread. Having secured it, he had wandered into the dining room to devour it.

The sudden arrival of the uninvited guests sent him scurrying for safety, chocolate in one hand and toast in the other. But with much laughter the aristocratic and hungry mob caught him, while Leopoldina Pastor, clinging to the coat-tails of his morning gown, cried out, helpless with laughter: "Whither away, Ferdinand? Don't leave us! To be able to commiserate with you, we must have food. Get us something to eat!"

And from the *maitre d'hotel* to Joselito, all set to work, barely able to supply a picnic luncheon for the hungry and emotional crowd.

A True-Cross Sister

VAUGHN DEVLIN

Lone gleams the arc-light's white image
In the flood 'neath the old granite pier;
Firm, though 'tis lost in the scrimmage
Of waters that belly and rear,
Soon comes a maiden belated,
O'er the bridge with a faltering pace;
The ball-room's gay sound has abated,
She—the queen of its beauty and grace.
But the Stone that has gleamed on her bosom
To her heart sent its bright shafts in vain
For there whirled the waters full grewsome
A dark sweep of sorrow and pain.

Where erstwhile the mad flood was tangled
Calm moved the stream and the air
So calm that the moon's image dangled
As though there were no waters there,
Again o'er the bridge came the maiden
Dark robes flowing full to her feet,
Some hovel with sorrow is laden;
Thither hastens sweet Soeur Marguerite
The Stone from her bosom's rejected,
For her heart is a glass chaste and true,
Where men see their sorrows reflected
And gather their courage anew.

Current Fact and Comment

ENERGETIC LAZINESS

THE modern world is 'energetically' lazy. Men think because they are always in a hurry, they are always busy; they imagine that restlessness is industry. The fact of the matter is that they are lazy, and what they would have us believe to be the exhaust of a high-powered turbine is simply the whistle of a peanut stand. This is an age of anesthetics: painless surgery, painless dentistry, painless thinking. To be 'cultured' one need not know how to *think*, one need only know how to *talk*—and to be 'cultured' you know, is everything. "Can you say: protoplasm, H. G. Wells, advanced thought, feminism, social service, Bernard Shaw, eugenics? Yes? My, my, how learned you are!"

Nothing is so insipid as the repetition of a stale joke; the 'culture' stuff is nauseating. Every place is infested by these funny, 'learned' folk, these living mimeographs, walking echoes of the Sunday supplement.

The world is intellectually asleep. But why try to wake it by injections of morphean modern thought? It does not need technical conferences, it needs Catholic catechisms. But before men can become less 'cultured' and more candid, before they can appreciate their vileness before God and their utter helplessness without Him, they must have more thoughtful leisure and less slap-dash laziness.

FRANCE AGAIN AT THE VATICAN

IN 1904 France broke relations with the Vatican, closed the religious schools and banished the Religious. This caused great joy to the enemies of the Church. They saw her end. Had not Italy robbed the Pope of his temporal power? And now that France had turned against her it was expected that Spain and Austria would do likewise. The Church without government support must fast sink into decay. Such was the prophecy of those who forget that the Church is not built upon men or governments.

Ten years later we see the retribution of the Hand of God. France is on her knees suffering a cruel scourging, while the Vatican in all its ancient glory looms brightly above the raging conflict. Nations vie with one another in courting the friendship of the Holy See. England and Holland which

had not been represented at the Vatican since the Reformation hastened to send their envoys to the Pope.

France was forced to deal with the Holy See unofficially during the war. To her sorrow she found that while she could not live without the Vatican the Vatican could very well live without her. So, in spite of the vigorous opposition of some of the Anti-Clericals, France re-established relations with the Vatican on December 29, 1921.

While French statesmen look to the new order of things as a means of supporting French political interests in Turkey, Syria and Central Europe, we can confidently expect that the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Pope will mean even more for the religious and moral well being of the French people.

A SHORTAGE OF PRIESTS THREATENS

CONCLUSIONS drawn from statistics are notoriously misleading. Official figures for the fourteen years ending with 1921 indicate an average of 1 priest to 855 of the Catholic population in the United States. From a superficial view we might conclude that one priest could minister to a flock of that size and have time to spare for leisurely occupations. We might also conclude, therefore, that no special efforts were required under the circumstances to foster vocations to the priesthood. The fallacy of these conclusions is clearly shown by George Barnard who analyzes them in

the *Ecclesiastical Review*.

First, we err in visualizing the average priest as comfortably and conveniently installed in the midst of a flock of eight or nine hundred Catholics and ministering to their ordinary needs. There are close to 6000 churches and chapels without resident pastors representing the heroic efforts of bishops and priests to stem the loss of faith in remote districts. In the border diocese of Corpus Christi over a hundred stations are attended from one mission centre. Again, the priest is occupied not only in a passive way with those who with a lively

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faith seek his ministrations, but much more earnestly and anxiously is he concerned about those who have fallen or gone astray. And he may not neglect any opportunity to bring in those who are not of his fold. Moreover the Church in America is now turning a corner and, confronting the new social conditions, is providing more systematically and directly for parochial, diocesan and national needs. To carry on these projects and for educational work a large quota of priests must be withdrawn from the parochial ministry,

Secondly, an alarming feature of the aforesaid statistics is disclosed when we inquire how the proportion of priests to Catholic population has been maintained. On the one hand there is the steady increase in the population and on the other there is the loss of clergy by death—345 priests died in 1920. To maintain the proportion 770 priests have been added to the total yearly. Now the startling statement is made that America supplied less than half of these. And, further, the countries, which have for years regularly contributed to the ranks of our clergy, can no longer do so. The war besides

depleting their numbers opened new mission fields and responsibilities.

Similar concern about vocations to the ministry has been manifested among non-Catholic bodies. Almost invariably the reason given in their case is that the clergy are underpaid. Such a motive does not enter into our calculations. About one among every four priests in this country tries to live consistently with a vow of poverty assumed in a religious order. Many secular priests uncomplainingly feel the pinch of poverty more sharply than they. The generosity of our people must now be extended to the preparatory field. The necessary expense attached to the long years of training while not excessive, is prohibitive to many a youth in meagre circumstances but with a genuine vocation and an ardent zeal for souls. Any Catholic casting about for some practical method of returning thanks to God for blessing him with earthly riches need but inquire how he may directly help to set such a youth upon his career with all that career may entail for the faith, for souls and for the glory of God.

LAY-RETREATS FOR THE YOUTH

AMONG those making the week-end lay-retreats are regularly found young men and boys.

They are of that critical period when the supporting props of parental and school discipline have been removed: of that period when their spiritual guides consider anxiously the rebound from the restraint of discipline to the larger freedom. Experienced pastors have studied and applied various methods covering the mercurial age when a wholesome interest in spiritual affairs and contact with the sources of grace must be maintained. For both boys and girls retreats regularly made have an excellent stabilizing effect. Father Martindale in the Irish Ecclesiastical Record says: "The enormous bulk of our children leave school at eleven to fourteen, and even the more fortunate classes do so at eighteen, and tend to do so younger. In neither case is there any Catholic education to follow which keeps pace with every other education that life is giving them—intellectual, professional, social, and that of sheer experience of the physical and mental crises of adolescence. Mere memories of childhood's pieties, mere assertions of authority are not, and I dare say should not be, enough for the growing boy or girl. I do not assuredly decry piety; it is astonishing how its delicate flower survives in

the hideous life of factory or workshop, or in garage or medical lecture-room, in very many cases. But not normally. How should it? And authority? The authority of public opinion is a very weighty one, and in our press, our theatres, our higher educational books and establishments the authority runs mostly counter to that of catechism and of sermon. In the conflict between authorities, that which is to conquer must be very clearly the best guaranteed. And in our early education it is impossible to anticipate all that life will suggest to make the Church's authority seem weak. Nor can we merely be satisfied with reclaiming souls that have suffered in faith or morals. We ought to *prevent*. And we cannot be satisfied with Catholics whose private career is correct, or who at least present themselves for a cure when they fall spiritually sick. The Church must be Apostolic in each of her members. We ought to *inspire*."

"To help to this end, I can conceive no method anywhere near so efficacious as retreats for boys and girls who have lately left school, and for every class of adult."

But the suggestion to make the retreat must in most cases come from the parents.

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HATERS OF WEALTH

HE had quite forgotten those million dollars spurned by a Bay State scion a year ago until it was recently announced that the young man had changed his mind and had decided to accept the legacy. An interval was allowed for it to be buzzed around—"I told you so"—and then the harassed youth assured the public that he had not changed his opinion about excessive fortunes and that he planned to redistribute the million forthwith consistently with his announced principles. A strong impulse seized us to write and ask him to consider in the redistribution our China missionaries, a bursar for the Preparatory College and other projects which we thought would appeal as eminently in harmony with his principles. But we abandoned the notion upon reflecting that he had probably received advice enough how to distribute such a fortune as his several times multiplied.

This embarrassed beneficiary is opposed to the economic system which makes possible the accumulation of towering fortunes. With Shakespeare's character he claims:

"Distribution should so undo excess,

And each man have enough."

The communal life of the Spartans, if not of the early Christians, would appeal to him, and he is probably familiar with the austere theories of Tolstoi on the subject. The latter also knew that his large possessions belied his theories and he therefore gave them all away—to his wife.

Whenever the supernatural motive is not apparent, instances of the rejection of wealth always cause wonder if not suspicion. It is conceivable that one with the taste and instincts for rural life such as Mr. Garland professes could be fully contented with his lot and could see no further emolument in stored wealth. But might he not wisely employ the million at least in spreading similar wholesome tastes and instincts in reply to the lament in the war-time ballad: "How are you going to keep them down on the farm?"

St. Paul, the hermit, in order to serve God more freely, chose to live in the desert where a palm-tree furnished him shelter, food and raiment. At this season palm-trees are featured in advertisements alluring the wealthy to the balmy playgrounds of the South. The holy hermit could successfully challenge these to prove that they found greater happiness and contentment than he.

Material poverty may be viewed as an evil. Because it centers itself in the slums, it fosters slum ideals and impedes character growth in the young. It cannot be denied that the possession of moderate wealth procures reasonable comfort and surcease from anxiety and allows leisure for nobler occupations. The danger lies in the spirit of avarice entering in. As Ruskin describes it: "Wherever we are, to go somewhere else: whatever we have, to get something more." The spirit of avarice is implied also in the farmer's definition of prosperity: "Prosperity means having a mortgage and getting it paid off; and when you've paid off, getting enough to buy a parlor organ; and then having enough to trade the organ for a fine piano, and so on without any limit whatsoever."

Supernatural, well-ordered poverty is recommended by the Church to her children for two motives. The surrender of one's possessions may be made in the light of heroic sacrifice, that is, out of love for and in imitation of Him Who, for our sakes, was born in a stable, often had not whereon to lay His Head, and Whose poor material legacy were only His garments to be raffled for by His executioners. Poverty also is a curative against avarice. Not in riches, but in what riches can so readily procure for the indulgence of every passion lies the peril. Hence could the Savior warn that the rich would hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. Only those who love God will enter there. Riches too easily procure for a man all that excludes God from his heart.

WAR THEN AND NOW

CONSIDER the Disarmament Conference striving to regulate the use of submarines, poison-gases and bombing planes. How prolific has not devilish ingenuity been in the brief interim since Hirman Maxim, the great American gun-

maker, was knighted by Queen Victoria. On that occasion he elicited from Lord Salisbury the characterization: "Maxim" he said "has prevented more men dying of old age than any other man living."

The Broken Lure

MATTHEW KENAN CAREY

WE were playing for very small stakes. All afternoon, however, Trainor had been losing so steadily, that from the pile of chips before the other five of us, it was evident that he owed quite a considerable sum. And Trainor was a typically hard loser. Extremely jovial when winning, a gloom now diffused itself from his dark face and massive body. For some time his silence had been nothing less than ominous; and it was with a feeling of dread that I watched the brewing storm, which I knew must soon break.

Suddenly he pulled out his watch.

"Well, boys!" he said briskly with a pitiable attempt to smile, "we have been playing this baby's game long enough now. I have just exactly an hour left. How about making it a regular game for this last hour, with the sky the limit?"

He looked around half defiantly and half smilingly. For a few minutes there was no answer. It was plainly manifest that the proposal was anything but welcome to the rest of us.

"For my part, Trainor," I said firmly, "I veto that proposition—absolutely." The others voiced their approval.

Trainor discarded his half smile then, and became wholly defiant.

"Afraid, hey?" he sneered. "Just like you, Barnot; a quitter from the ground up. Fine way to treat a man after he has been losing all afternoon. Besides, the way luck has been running, you ought to be glad of the chance to make some easy money."

"Trainor," I said good humoredly, "that is just where you make your mistake. I didn't sit down here to make money. This is not a gambling proposition with me. I pay a few dollars to have a little recreation here, just as I would buy a theatre ticket. When my money is gone, the show is over with me; and I stop satisfied. If I happen to win, well—so much the better."

"That sounds good," he snarled, "but you'd sing a different tune, if you were in my place."

"You know, Trainor, you are not telling the truth," I replied quickly. "You know that before I sit down to a game, I always tell you just how much I can afford to pay for my amusement, and when I lose that, I quit. It is not because I am

afraid of losing my winnings that I object to your proposal. It is simply the principle of the thing I'm against. It's that idea of 'making some easy money,' as you say—of gambling, I call it—which is not my idea of a gentleman's recreation."

My antagonist here lost control of his temper. "I may not be what you consider a gentleman, Barnot," he cried hotly, "but at any rate I am not a quitter, and I am going to prove that you are."

With that he pulled from his coat a wallet and a pair of dice, and threw them on the table.

"You see that money," he went on, "and those dice! Now I'll bet you ten to one up to any amount you say, that I will roll a higher number than you four times out of five. Now you—"

At this moment a hand clapped Trainor on the shoulder and swinging him about, he found himself looking into the steady eyes of Thomas Jordan, President of our K. of C. Club. He had come unnoticed into the room during our argument. Jordan picked up the wallet and dice and shoved them into the pocket of Trainor's overcoat which he held. Then he threw his coat and hat into the fellow's arms.

"Trainor," said he, eyeing the man sternly and steadily, "you are hardly worth talking to. You can't understand that a man can have principles and stick to them. I think you had better take your dice out of here."

For a moment I thought the big man would strike Jordan; but seeing that we were all against him, he turned suddenly without a word, and the door slammed after him.

* * * *

THERE was no more card playing that evening. We settled up quickly in awkward silence, and filed downstairs into the smoking room. It was just "between darkness and daylight, when a raw November night was beginning to lower," and the bright warmth cast by a blazing log fire here was cheerily welcome.

We gathered about it instinctively, still silent; but happily, Jim Toomey, a close friend of Jordan, relieved the situation.

"Say, Tom, old boy," he said cheerily, "you certainly surprised little Jimmy this afternoon. I

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didn't know there was that much spunk in your whole family."

Jordan smiled, and the spell hanging upon us was broken.

"I knew you didn't like to play cards yourself, M' Lord President," went on Toomey, banteringly, "but I never thought you were against others playing. Man alive—"

"I'm not against others playing, Jim," cut in Jordan, "you ought to know that. It was the dice that made me boil over."

"Ah! ha!" laughed his friend, "I guess you and Barnot are in the same boat there, hey?"

"Honestly, Jim," replied the other, "I'm dead in earnest about this. I would tell you why; but it means more to me than you can imagine. Besides, you wouldn't believe me anyway."

"He certainly has a fine opinion of us," remarked Toomey dryly. "But you can't get out of it that way, Tom. You've got to go on now; you'll have no peace if you don't. Gentlemen!" he drolled out solemnly, "be seated!"

And so, laughing we drew our chairs about the fire place.

"Well," said our President, taking a seat nearest the hearth, "I guess Jim wins as usual; and," he said, passing a box of cigars, "to make a good beginning at least, let us light up."

"Fine!" observed Toomey sagely, "Best beginning of any story I have ever heard."

Gazing with a far away look into the fire, Jordan began. "You may have wondered at times, why I never play cards. I have often told you that I am not opposed to others playing; but with regard to myself personally, it is much the same as with some men and drink. There are those, you know, who can't touch liquor without losing control of themselves, and so they are strict teetotalers, while at the same time they do not at all begrudge another man his glass of beer or light wine. I heard what Barnot said about his idea of card playing; and I admire him for it. But I am so constituted, that it would be morally impossible for me to do as he does. I am forced, so to speak, to be a card drunkard or an absolute prohibitionist, although I realize that others can be temperance players, and I respect them as such."

"Say!" broke in Herman Mueller, a stout sober old German, "I just wish you could go to Washington, Tom, and tell those prohibitionist fellows down there, where they get off at."

We all knew that old Mueller sorely missed his glass of beer; and he was so unaffectedly earnest now that even Jordan had to laugh.

"Thanks for the compliment, Herman," he said, "I guess I follow my dad on that question. He believed in the old motto: 'Live, and let live.' Dad was always fond of a friendly game of cards, and loved to have me play with him. I took to the game at once too; and in a short time, I became quite an expert in several forms of play, including draw poker. So much so, indeed, that dad began to boast to his friends that his boy could beat any one of them. And at last one night, when they came to our house for a game, as they did periodically, they prevailed upon him to let me 'sit in.'"

"You talk like a regular player," remarked Toomey.

"Just wait a bit," said Jordan, with a smile, and went on "I can never forget that first real game of mine. I can feel the thrill of it yet, even when I watch others play. From the beginning I was as cool as a veteran; and I began to more than make good my dad's prediction. There was a glamour about the whole affair that was irresistible. The jovial faces, the spirit of good fellowship, the praises of my playing combined with the lure of the game, the feelings of mingled suspense and exultation simply overwhelmed me. When the party broke up in the 'wee sma' hours, and I found myself with spending money for month and a number of new friends besides, you may be sure I needed no second invitation to the next game at another house.

"In fact from that time on, I was a whole souled gambler. All along the passion had been growing unsuspected, and it was now my master. Soon I began to play almost every night, and as the game that suited my dad's friends became too tame for me, I sought and found other congenial fellows ready to satisfy my gambling appetite to the full."

"And I always thought you were afraid to play," muttered the astonished Jim.

JORDAN only smiled. "But don't misunderstand me, gentlemen," he added, looking about the group, "when I say I was a full fledged gambler. For even then I did not realize what a hold the game had upon me. You see, I told myself that a game of cards was my only recreation; and as I was usually a winner, I argued falsely that I was not playing beyond my means. And so, all this time I managed to keep pretty

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regularly to the Sacraments as I had been brought up to do. At home no one even suspected my danger. You all remember my wife; and you will not wonder that I managed to stop playing for a while after our marriage. But with her death the old habit broke out again, and before long I was worse than ever. And now our crowd was so far gone that cards alone did not satisfy us. We had to conclude our entertainment every night by throwing dice for an hour or two."

The man spoke grimly now, and even Jim was becoming too much interested to break in.

"As I said before," he kept on, "I can appreciate a friendly game of cards for low stakes where there is sociability and a chance to get some real recreation. But there seems to me absolutely no reason for dicing. It is unworthy of a man and fit only for the gambling den and the back lot. There's no skill here, no friendly rivalry, nothing but an insane gambling fever, a hot furious debauch, mingled with invocations of the gods of chance, accusations of one another, and curses."

FOR the second time that day Jordan 'boiled over,' as he delivered his tirade against twirling dice. And I was heartily glad that I had not accepted Trainor's challenge that afternoon. It was only with a noticeable effort that he regained his wonted composure, and then went on more slowly.

"You remember, I said that I had been fortunate for a while. The time soon came when my luck turned, and I began to get into debt. It is remarkable how quickly money won in gambling will disappear. It seems to melt away like the poet's 'snow upon the desert's dusty face.' At home now I became surly and peevish. My business too began to suffer; for my thoughts during the day were mainly about the game that night. Heaven alone knows what eventually would have happened but for the incident I am now going to tell you."

At this moment I stole a glance at Toomey. He was sitting motionless, his eyes fixed on Jordan, the hand holding his cigar raised half way to his mouth. He must have been that way several minutes, for the cigar had quite gone out. I had a good smile all to myself as the story went on.

"One night we had thrown dice a much longer time than usual. In our party then was a fine young fellow, who, like myself was gradually going to the

dogs. You would never guess his name, so I'll tell it to you at once—Joe Morton."

"You don't mean our Joe," exclaimed Toomey, "you can't."

"The very same," replied Jordan, "the late second lieutenant, Joseph Morton, killed in action at Chateau Thierry. You see, gentlemen, I knew him long before you did, when he was just a lad and a bit wild. At that time his old father was living and depending on him; and as Joe and I were pals, I often tried to get him to stop gambling with us. But the boy always replied that he would quit only when I did. Both of us, indeed, wanted to break off badly; but we had that false pride, which fears the accusation of quitter—the very accusation you gave the lie to this afternoon," he added, looking straight at me.

I had to smoke fiercely to hide my embarrassment; but luckily he continued with his story.

"On this particular night, Joe had lost heavily. To make matters worse, it was all coming my way. I never felt so low down mean in my life, for I knew how badly off the lad was. But I couldn't think of offering sympathy at that time and place. So we kept on rolling the dice until my pal was cleaned out to the last penny."

"Joe," he went on, "was, as you know, always game to the core. And he only laughed as if it were all a good joke. Finally he took a bit of pasteboard from his pocket and threw it on the table. I saw it was a pawn ticket."

"There, Tom," he said, with an effort at gaiety, "that's for some luxury I don't need at all, so just roll me for it."

"I hesitated a moment. There was however nothing to do but to shake the dice and let them fly. But I knew, even before they stopped rolling, that the ticket was mine. With that, the party broke up; and stuffing my winnings into my pockets I hurried out. You may well believe that I didn't have the heart to speak to Joe, nor even to look at him.

When I got home, it was early morning. In the gray half light of my bedroom, I emptied my pockets. I knew what I really wanted to look at was the bit of card-board. I took it over to the window, and there I saw that Joe's "luxury" was a suit of clothes. I remembered then that he had been wearing an old shabby outfit lately; and my face burned. 'Something he didn't need at all,' I

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repeated bitterly. For the first time in my life I was sick with a wholesome loathing of myself and with everything connected with gambling."

Outside the circle of firelight, the room was now in complete darkness. I glanced around. In the bright flare of the flames, every face stood out clear cut; and I noticed that all eyes were fixed intently on the story teller, as he spoke now with evident feeling.

"Exhausted in mind and body, I thought to throw myself upon my bed for a few hours dressed as I was. But instinctively I dropped by it on my knees. For strangely enough, I had all these years kept to a pious practice taught me by my mother, God rest her, of kissing my little pocket crucifix, a keepsake of her's, before getting into bed. So, as I knelt mechanically, I took the crucifix from my coat and pressed it to my lips. As I did so, a depressing sense of guilt crept over me. The naked feet seemed very cold. I couldn't take the crucifix from my lips. And kneeling thus, I buried my hot face in the pillow."

* * * *

JORDAN paused a moment. There was a suspicion of a catch in his voice. Obviously he was measuring every word.

"I know now," he continued, "that I must have dozed off. For it seemed to me, that I was still playing with dice. But now my fellow gamblers were complete strangers. They were all dressed as I remembered to have seen some Roman soldiers in my old Latin school book of 'Caesar's Gallic Wars.' And I was dressed like them, with short tunic, breastplate and helmet, bare kneed, and sandals on my feet.

There were four of us; and we were intensely absorbed in our game, swearing in our excitement and calling on the old pagan gods of Rome.

At last my turn came. With a shout to Jove, I seized the dice and rolled the highest number possible.

"By Hercules!" one powerful fellow snarled, "the dog wins the prize."

And reaching back, he picked up something that lay behind him and flung it in my face. It dropped into my arms, and I saw that it was a suit of clothes.

Joe's suit! I thought at once. But then, suddenly it changed from a blue suit of modern make into a long white robe. And as I gazed wonderingly, everything else was crowded out of my mind by a voice, soft, yet clearer and sweeter than any other voice I had ever heard, almost directly above my head.

"Thomas!" it said, "What thou dost to the least of my brethren, thou dost unto Me."

"Terrified, I looked up."

Jordan's voice was husky, and his words came with difficulty.

"Above me was a Man, all naked but for a loin cloth. He was hanging outstretched upon a cross. At His feet, almost by my side, stood a Woman weeping. As I knelt there, with the dice in one hand and the long white garment in the other, I was painfully aware that they were looking intently at me.

I thought we stayed that way an endless time. I could neither move nor speak. I was conscious that my knees were aching sorely. I felt a cold wind blowing upon me. It penetrated to the marrow of my bones. Yet I dared not use the robe to protect myself. I tried to lift it up to the naked Figure. I could not. It was like a mass of lead. I cried to my former companions, but, with a look of horror, they fled into the darkness.

Again I struggled desperately to lift up the robe. When at length it seemed that I was about to succeed, the Figure faded before me. I cried out in frenzied anguish that I would yet return the robe though it cost my blood. Then suddenly I found myself kneeling by my bed, bathed in a cold sweat, my crucifix on the pillow, the fresh morning air blowing in upon me through the open window."

* * * *

Jordan leaned forward in the firelight. His pallid face was drawn. The soft crackling logs sounded clear in the silence.

The White Rose of Lucca

The Story of Gemma Galgani

MATTHEW KUEBEL

6—Resignation and Tears—(continued)

BUT independently of these revelations Gemma yearned to become a Passionist nun because that life was her ideal. The long hours of prayer and meditation at the feet of the Crucified; the severely penitential rule of life; the strict separation from the world by the Papal cloister, and at the same time the occasional occupations in works of zeal such as the teaching of catechism to children at the grille and the conducting of retreats for women within the enclosure—all this had a strong appeal for a zealous and ardent spirit like Gemma.

Gemma had hoped that the course of spiritual exercises which she, together with three companions, had decided to make at the Passionist Convent in Corneto, would be the first step in her flight from the world. Much to Gemma's surprise and to the regret of all her friends her application to be permitted to make the retreat was refused, although the other three young women received a more favorable answer. Evidently, the good Superior had heard a great deal about Gemma that was not at all in her favor and was convinced that Gemma was one of those deluded hysterical creatures who do not do well in convents. This repulse did not dishearten Gemma, much less embitter her against the nuns; instead she defended with characteristic sweetness the Mother Superior against others' loud expressions of chagrin.

Just at this time the establishing of a convent of Passionist nuns in Lucca began to be mooted, and, of course, one of the most zealous patrons and promoters of the good cause was Gemma herself. Gemma's zeal in the matter was probably the result of revelations she had received long before about the future convent, of which as far back as 1900 she was able to give a long description in a letter to Father Germanus shortly before the eminent priest became her spiritual guide. Now again Our Lord spoke to her about the good work, and His words had the effect of moving her to throw all her energies into it. "How often," the Savior said,

"how often have I not withheld My Father's anger, by presenting to Him a group of loved souls and generous victims. . . . They are the daughters of My Passion; but they are few and cannot suffice for everything. . . . Write at once to thy Father (Fr. Germanus); tell him to go to Rome and speak to the Pope of this desirable work: let him say that a great chastisement is threatened and victims are needed." At other times our Lord gave Gemma to understand that her becoming a Passionist nun was dependent upon the establishing of a Passionist convent in Lucca.

Stimulated by this double motive—the glory of God and her own spiritual interests—Gemma took a personal, energetic, and almost a principal part in the effort to get the work fairly started. She wrote innumerable letters filled with earnest pleading to this person and to that whose active interest was more or less indispensable, to arouse their serious effort, to allay their fears, to chide the backwardness dictated by too much human prudence. "Jesus wishes it," she would say, "and what Jesus wills must succeed." "Decide at once," she wrote to her Director, "for very soon it will be too late. Jesus will not wait any longer; and He has said to me that He will take me to Himself if within six months the work is not begun." But Gemma did not stop at mere words. Unweariedly she went hither and thither in Lucca, interesting in the work all she could, collecting money, and seeking a suitable location or building—any property which there was the remotest possibility of acquiring for the Passionist Sisters—in order that without delay the way might be opened for the coming of the little band of nuns from Corneto.

It is necessary to state only that Gemma's efforts for the founding of the convent had no results during her own lifetime. Our Divine Lord's conditions—that the work be started within a given time—was not fulfilled, for month after month had slipped by and nothing had been done. Therefore, Our Lord told Gemma that it was too late; that she

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must not think anymore of becoming a nun, and that she must be resigned. Then (she tells us), "I ran away to my room to be more free there and alone, and I cried a great deal. At last I exclaimed: 'Thy Will be done.' But those tears were not of grief; they were tears of perfect resignation."

ONLY after Gemma's death were energetic measures employed to found the convent, when quite smoothly, or at least with no more than the usual share of opposition and difficulty, the work quickly progressed by ways and means that Gemma had foretold; so that within two years the Passionist Nuns were established in Lucca. No doubt some day another interesting prophecy of Gemma's will be fulfilled. "The Passionist nuns," she once said, "have not wished to receive me, and for all that I wish to be with them, and shall be so when I am dead." If Holy Church makes a favorable pronouncement on Gemma's sanctity, the angelic girl will have the consolation of being with the nuns, who will then be able to tell that the true patron and foundress of their convent in Lucca is the sweet virgin, Gemma Galgani.

Gemma never realized her ambition of becoming a nun, but she did acquire a degree of sanctity more sublime than the religious life ordinarily aspires to or contemplates. By a life-long union with Jesus Crucified and by a miraculous conformity with His image Gemma had become a child of the Passion. She was now ripe for Heaven; God had said to her, 'Behold I come quickly,' and it only remained for her to prepare for the coming of her Lord.

On the feast of Pentecost, 1902, God revealed to His faithful servant during an ecstasy her vocation of expiating during the year of life that remained to her the sins of unfaithful Christians, and Gemma with characteristic generosity acquiesced in God's designs. Immediately after this she fell gravely ill and remained in a most critical condition for two months. Thereupon Father Germanus wrote to her and commanded her to ask God for her cure. Gemma obeyed, not without great pain; and Our Divine Lord signified to her that she would recover, but that she would be well only for a short time. Instantly Gemma was well again, and within one week she regained her full strength, and her complexion resumed its former freshness and beauty.

But God's Will had to be fulfilled, so that on the 9th of September, after a respite of twenty days,

Gemma again fell dangerously ill. Before very long she was reduced to a most pitiable condition, and the members of the household wrote in great alarm to her Director: "Gemma is very ill; she is reduced to skin and bone; she suffers excruciating torments and internal pains that terrify...Gemma feels great need of you. Come quickly to tell us how to act."

THE devoted Director answered this call for assistance without delay, and his presence at the bed-side of his saintly spiritual child was a great consolation to her. He allowed her to renew her general confession from which, at this eleventh hour of her life, he again received the assurance that Gemma had never committed the least fully deliberate sin, and that she would take undefiled to Heaven her baptismal innocence. Remaining with her several days, he prepared her for the reception of the Holy Viaticum and administered to her the comfort of his holy counsels. After several days had elapsed without any change in her condition, Gemma said to her spiritual Father: "Father, if you wish you may go...This illness will certainly finish me, but not yet; at least that is what Jesus had told me." Then Father Germanus blessed Gemma and returned home, not dreaming that he looked upon her for the last time.

But before the happy release of death would come, Gemma had many obediences to fulfill—many long months of agonizing suffering; she must first be crucified in body and soul as never before, and step by step God prepared the instruments of her immolation. Gemma must give up a happy home, those dear ones whom she had learned to love as kith and kin, in order to be alone, to suffer alone, to be crucified alone with Jesus. The advice of the Physicians and of Father Germanus that Gemma be segregated from the rest of the family, for a long time was not heeded. The Gianninis were most reluctant to part with one whom they regarded as the Guardian Angel of their home. But at length more prudent counsel prevailed, and Gemma was removed to a house across the street. The thought that she would be near those whom she loved so dearly was some consolation to Gemma in the sorrow she felt in the separation.

For a while the afflicted girl had one consolation—that of painfully making her way every morning to a nearby Church to hear Mass and to receive Holy Communion. But high fever quickly set in

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and Gemma was unable to leave her bed any more. Thereafter the ravages of her malady were rapid and terrifying. The words of one of her attendants describe quite graphically the pitiable condition to which before long Gemma was reduced. "Poor victim," the lady wrote to Father Germanus, "she suffers without cessation, and feels as if her bones were being disjoined. It is evident that she is tortured in every part of her body and is being dissolved in hopeless agony. For the last twenty days she has lost her sight; her voice has become so weak that she can scarcely articulate, so that it is almost impossible to catch what she says; she is a living skeleton that seems to waste more and more, and to see her is to be filled with pain and dismay."

"First the body and then the soul," Gemma had said in declaring her willingness to bear the full weight, if possible, of the Savior's pains. Her frail body was fixed to the cross; now she was to be crucified in her soul. All those Heavenly privileges and sublime graces—her familiar colloquies face to face with Jesus and Mary, the abiding visible presence of her Guardian Angel, all those sweet raptures and ecstatic contemplations—were withdrawn; a thick veil of darkness had intervened between Heaven and her pure soul; all Heaven seemed to have forgotten one who had lived her whole life only for God and Holy things. This crushing weight of darkness was the instrument of unspeakable pain.

BUT who can tell the immense anguish caused this pure soul by the relentlessly violent persecutions of the fiend! None but he could have been the author of those strange and repulsive phantasms filling Gemma's mind with all manner of anxiety, sadness, and fear. What else but Satanic insolence could have suggested that all this spiritual and physical misery was God's characteristic way of rewarding life-long fidelity in His service? Then with strange inconsistency the devil would make capital of her profound spiritual desolation and endeavor to persuade her that she would certainly be lost because of her hypocrisy and deceit, of which her confessors were the principal dupes. This temptation was so sadly effective that Gemma, resolving to be saved at any cost, wrote a history of her whole life, an account in which she made herself out to be guilty of the greatest sins. Sending this confession to a priest who was well acquainted with her, Gemma asked him to come and absolve her

from all her sins. The priest came and reassured her, and thereafter she enjoyed a respite of peace.

But Satan, knowing that his time was short, would not be stayed; if such eminent virtue could not be shaken, the possessor of it at least must be made to feel the full force of his malicious hatred. In an endless variety of ways he sought, and was only too successful in the effort, to torment the poor invalid. The words of an attendant at the sick-bed vouch for the reality of these assaults. "That abominable beast," the lady wrote, "will be the end of our dear Gemma—deafening blows, forms of ferocious animals, etc. I came away from her in tears because the devil is wearing her out and there is no remedy for it. . . . We help her by sprinkling holy water in her room; then the disturbance ceases only to begin again worse than before."

During all these sufferings and conflicts Gemma was engaged in uninterrupted converse with Heaven—the many prayers she uttered aloud, showed how the faith and love and hopeful trust of the saintly sufferer rode triumphant over the billows of the storm. "Dost thou not know, Jesus," she would say, "that I am all thine? Yes; all thine. . . . Suffering, yes; but I wish to go to Paradise to Thee." Then turning in spirit to the Blessed Virgin she would say: "Mother, my own Mother, you must tell Jesus I will keep my word to Him, that I will be faithful to Him."

In fact all those beautiful qualities and virtues for which she had been so much revered and so dearly loved, shone with new splendor on her bed of pain. Her patience, her unconcern amid need and discomfort, the sweetness and cheerfulness which always distinguished her did not abandon her now that she was enduring pains so great that as some one said, "it would almost appear that one could not suffer more even in Purgatory." But what most edified people who saw her was her great humility. After a life of blameless innocence and wonderful virtues, her constant prayer was, "My Jesus Mercy!" "O Jesus, oh how many sins! . . . But thy Mercy is infinite. Thou has pardoned me so many times, O forgive me now once more!"

So the poor victim of Divine Love and Justice dragged on a weary afflicted, and blameless life on a bed of pain for six long months. Prayer, conflict, suffering was all that life meant to Gemma as the Holy Week of 1903 drew near—that week during which all that remained to her of Christ's sacrifice was to be offered.

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ON Wednesday of Holy Week Gemma received the Viaticum, and on the following day, Holy Thursday, she communicated again. She made her thanksgiving with her customary fervor, when the spiritual darkness in which she was enveloped was momentarily lifted; Gemma went into an ecstasy during which she was heard to say: "Before thou art finished, oh how much has to be gone through!" Later on she said to one of the nursing Sisters: "What a day tomorrow (Good Friday) will be!"

When on Good Friday morning a Lady who had been watching with Gemma through the long hours of the night signified her intention of leaving for a short rest, Gemma said: "Don't leave me until I am nailed to the cross. I have to be crucified with Jesus. He has said to me that His children have to be crucified." Soon after the saintly invalid again went into ecstasy, when she stretched out her arms in the form of a cross and remained that way for several hours. And what a strange ecstasy it was! Her sweet face, still beautiful after the ravages of disease, was not lit up as hitherto with a heavenly light indicative of the unspeakable joy pouring into the soul. Rather her face was a picture of pain, anguish, desolation;—all the sorrows of Jesus were engulfing Gemma's soul. No wonder that the eyes of all were riveted upon that blessed countenance! What better picture of Christ Crucified could have been desired! Gemma remained in all the agony of death until Holy Saturday morning, when Extreme Unction was administered.

Thus crucified in body by the ravages of disease, crucified in soul by immeasurable anguish, deprived of all spiritual comfort by the absence of her spiritual advisors, who best knew how to console her, well could the holy victim raise her feeble voice and exclaim: "Now it is indeed true that nothing more remains to me....Jesus. I recommend my poor soul to Thee, Jesus!" These were Gemma's last words.

A half hour passed, during which Gemma is seated on her bed, with her head resting on the shoulder of her adopted mother. The kind friends who had assisted her all along are gathered around and deep is the conviction of all that they are gathered at the death-bed of a saint. Gemma is absorbed in silent thought, when suddenly as all eyes are fixed on her angelic face, she sweetly smiled, inclined her head to one side and ceased to live. There was no specific agony, no muscular

strain; that death was but a sweet sleep in the arms of the Heavenly Spouse. Gemma died at one o'clock in the afternoon of Holy Saturday, the 11th of April, 1903. "What a beautiful thing," Gemma used to say, "to die on a great solemnity." But what could have been more beautiful even in her eyes, than to die on Holy Saturday, after having kept Good Friday as she did in company with Jesus suffering.

Gemma's longing to become a Passionist nun was well-known, and therefore, after her death, the body was clothed in black with the Passionist badge upon her breast. A crown of flowers was placed upon her head; her hands were joined just as she used to hold them while in ecstasy. The charming smile with which she breathed her last remained, and the sainted corpse bespoke an indescribable peace and seemed clothed in a heavenly beauty.

PEOPLE came in great numbers to view the body, and took occasion to touch it with rosaries or other articles of devotion, or to obtain some little token afterwards to be treasured as a precious relic. Priests who knew Gemma came to her room and knelt a long time in prayer. "I feel that I am in a sanctuary," one priest said.... "How well one can pray here....Blessed Gemma, who knew how to live like an angel and die a saint."

In the late afternoon of Easter Sunday the body was removed to the cemetery. There was a large gathering of townspeople and the funeral cortege—ordinarily a strange contrast to the joy of Easter—seemed really like a festive celebration. How could it be otherwise; this was the occasion of Gemma's flight to Heaven in company with her Risen Lord!

The hallowed remains were placed in a privileged tomb under the colonnade of the cemetery. A marble statue of an angel and the inscription on a marble slab mark the spot where Gemma rests in peace. Thus reads her epitaph:

"Gemma Galgani of Lucca a most innocent virgin, who in her twenty-fifth year, consumed rather by the fire of Divine Love than by the violence of disease, flew into the arms of her Heavenly spouse on Holy Saturday the 11th of April, 1903. Peace be to thee, O sweet soul, in company with the angels!"

(The End)

The Passion of Christ in Symbols

HUBERT CUNNINGHAM, C. P.

DEVOTION to the sacred Passion of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ reaches back to the beginning of christianity. All other devotions compared to it are recent: they flow from this as from their source for love of Jesus Crucified is the fountain of all Catholic piety. Moreover, this wonderful love of the early Christians was never an elusive generality or vague sentiment; it was always a solid and substantial reality as all genuine devotion ever is and ever must be. That is why it twined itself around the cross and stood out bold, practical, particular and as a public fact before the whole world of friend and foe. But a time came when prudence dictated another course and christian faith took refuge behind the merciful devisement of holy disguise. In this article we shall follow our subject thither and study early christian devotion to the Passion as this is revealed in symbols.

We know the recklessness of love and above all of holy love. It wants to be known; it cannot be held down. We also know that devotion to Jesus Christ Crucified means nothing but love and love for the most reckless Lover that ever thrilled the human bosom and that is the simple reason why the holy unction of our forefathers in the faith was reckless; it was fierce, fearless and so even in peril of life their beloved cross was defiantly flaunted before the world. It was this open, constant and daring display of the sign of Christ, its conquering march through the Roman Empire, its rapid spread through every strata of the social life, its discovery among the consuls and the captains, the soldiers and the slaves, its evidence among the senators and the civilians, its worship by the dignified matrons and the timid little children; this was the spectacle that goaded the deep hatred of the defeated Jew, that excited the jealousy of the pagan, that roused the suspicious fears of the statesman till all these inimical elements combined their forces in violent opposition and persecuted the cross with relentless fury.

Prudently, gradually these open displays of

their beloved emblem by the hated christians ceased. Even more, for the sake of holy reverence all sacred objects—sacred rites, ceremonies, duties, practices and teachings—were withheld from the knowledge and even the observation of the heathen world to guard these divine things from misrepresentation and desecration by the wild passions of the time. These teachings and practices were but slowly and carefully divulged even to the newmade converts and catechumens lest these might be carried by their enthusiasm, as thousands before them had been, to exceed the bounds of discretion. The prudent retirement here indicated steadily grew till it ultimately became general and a law of the church, called the *disciplina arcani* or the duty of secrecy.

As time progressed this law grew more and more severe till nothing whatever of importance in teaching or practice appeared without but always under the disguise of signs and symbols. Bishop McDonald goes as far as to say that in some parts of the world it was forbidden to even so much as commit to writing such fundamental and sacred matters as the creeds, the forms and ceremonies, for fear that these might reach the hands of the enemy; instead all these sacred matters were handed down merely by word of mouth and retained only by memory. For those zealous souls the law of secrecy was a severe restraint. But the years were hard; hatred was rampant and outrage and cruelty and murder were carried to every christian home. However under these legal restrictions love for the cross did not languish; as they reverently, more reverently withdrew it from the vulgar eyes, the christians drew it more tenderly, if that could be possible, to their own hearts and with that marvelous ingenuity and resourcefulness which deep affection alone commands they fed their fervor by fashioning that despised figure and pouring their worship upon it in a wonderful variety of ways.

HOLY love laughs at locks and laws and easily finds a way and so the Church was made rich by the enforced skill of these early devotees

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of the suffering God. Their eager eyes looked about them and they discovered something suggestive of those sweet sufferings on all sides—in the sights which kindly nature spread before them, in the regular course of ordinary life and in the occasional experience. When we are taught to see the cross in the wood of the trees, the cruel nails in the iron and steel with which the world is filled, and the thorny crown in the finger prick we suffer when cutting the blushing rosebud, we are practicing lessons taught us by those great christians of the hard years long ago. They could find the cross they loved standing all around them: it was there in the four points of the compass and in the pick-axe of the diggers who worked out the tunnels of the catacombs; they saw it in the figure of the orante, which means the good christian praying down in that darkness with extended arms; they saw it in the singletree of the wagon and the yardarm of the ship mast; the stretching arms of the swimmer, the wings of the flying bird and the fins of the fish in the water revealed it; and was it not plainly evident in the shank of the anchor, yes, even in the crossbar from which hung the guidon or bannerette of Rome's great pagan legions? Every one of these objects were used as a memento of the cross and everyone of them comes down to us as a symbol in valuable monuments from those early days. All the great mysteries of the faith were symbolized to satisfy the hungry mind and support the longing heart and for this purpose a multitude of objects were used as representations.

ONE of the most familiar of these emblems was the fish, commonly known by its Greek name *ichthys* which means a fish. This mystic figure is very ancient. Examples of it are abundant; there are many evidences of it to be found among the early writers. The first of these to mention the fish in this connection, so far as we can discover at this long distance, is Clement of Alexandria who recommends that all christians have their seals stamped with a fish. Monsignor Hackett whom I quote for this information, pointedly remarks on this incident that the saint "offers no reason for this recommendation; from which it may be safely inferred that the meaning was so well understood that explanation was unnecessary:" and since the holy scholar, Clement, was born about the year 150 the christian sign of the fish is ancient indeed.

In those bitter years they were compelled to resort to the sign-manual for the purposes of pro-

tection and the figure of a fish was the countersign of a christian. Traced by the point of his staff in the dust at his feet the sign of the fish revealed to the casual acquaintance that the traveller was a christian. But the reasons which lead to the selection of this particular figure rather than any other make this fact here more pertinent and interesting. The first is because the fish in the water with his protruding fins was to the christian mind an indicator of the cross; a second reason, however, is still more beautiful; that mystic sign is such a delicate contrivance of love undying but unknown! It is this:— 'the fish' (in its original greek) is an acrostic made from the initial letters of the ancient ejaculation, which interpreted means "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour!" The first letter of each word put together form the Greek word meaning a fish. So that simple figure was to the christian a living, vibrant act of faith by which he proclaimed to God and the initiated "I believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and My Savior!" Is it any wonder then that to those who understood the allegory the fish should have been specially popular? It is rich in meaning and so is constantly in evidence in one or other manner.

THE active faith of our Catholic progenitors was very fertile in these useful manifestations of solid piety; for that reason we, their children can sincerely thank the *disciplina arcani* or ancient law of secrecy; it was that church ruling which drove the pent-up love of those great heroes to devise new ways of expression and so that love blossomed forth in the elaborate veillings of symbolism. For brevity's sake I have selected only three examples of this and among them the *ichthys* or fish for a special reason in point and it is this:—the most sweetly appealing of all the ancient emblems of religious mystery is the dolphin. This particular fish is used in three ways, each of which is expressive of devotion to the Passion of Christ. It is first, as an *ichthys*, the representation of a christian as said above, and secondly it signifies fleetness—rapid or intense action; but in either sense the dolphin is shown as moving toward the Christ sign which will be explained later on in this article. In these two forms its meaning is vivid and inspiring: it tells the earnest desire of the disciple of Christ, like St. Paul, to know nothing more than Christ and Him crucified and to fly to His cross as to refuge, strength and consolation. But the third token of the dolphin

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is specially touching and is well known to the whole world. For the better understanding of this ancient type it should be recalled that to the pagan world of poetry and romance the dolphin signified the heart; it was the representation of tender affection and the emblem of love. The christian took up this suggestion, twined the dolphin about the anchor cross and, lo! the effect eloquently tells its own story to eye and to heart—the story which we are now trying to better learn—that the love and affection, that the very hearts of our ancient soldiers of Christ were most tenderly twined about their standard—the cross of Jesus!

The last evidence which I shall adduce in the present article is of personal interest to the editors of *THE SIGN* and to all the members of the religious family to which they belong—the Passionist Fathers and the Passionist Nuns—because these carry it forth worn large on the left breast of their coarse black habit and mantle as a part of their heaven-appointed badge. It is the signet XPI.

THERE is a variety of notions about this cipher; some are false, some are vague; even among educated Catholics few, indeed, have grasped its exact meaning and yet it is one of the very instructive, usual and ancient forms of devotion to the Passion. A little explanation will make it all very clear and helpful.

This venerable trinity is made up of the first three letters of the Greek word *Kristos*, Christ. They are the exact equivalent of the first four letters in the latin name *Christus* or the English word Christ and the mark above, as may be noted on the Passionist's badge, shows it is an abbreviation in the same manner as we use a period when abbreviating a word in our own language. As an ordinary example *Jos.* is the English abbreviation of the name Joseph, so XPI is the Greek abbreviation of the name *Kristos*. It is expressing it shortly by using only the first three letters and so like all similar arbitrary contractions the form is stationary; it admits of no change or modification but takes its grammatical form indifferently from its mere position in a sentence; itself will remain ever the same—XPI. It is a sign.

The name of Our Blessed Lord put forth in this truncated and familiar style was variously called by the ancients the "cree," the "chiro," the "sigla," the "monogram" by some it is inaccurately termed the "labarum." Its correct name is the "Chrismon,"

rendered in ordinary language as the "Christ Sign" or simply "The Sign." This sign appears on the distinctive emblem of the Passionists as JESU XPI PASSIO (The Passion of Jesus Christ.) and therefore have these religious ever called their badge "The Sign," from that holy cipher, XPI—the sign of Christ.

This will appear even clearer if we turn our attention briefly to an exact parallel in the IHS. This is a parallel in many ways; first of all and strikingly in that it lives in a permanent mist of wrong notion before the ordinary mind.

A SHORT time ago a knot of young church students were discussing the meaning and history of the characters I H S. One maintained they stood for "I Have Suffered" and argued: "I saw those letters many a time in Ireland. They were always put over the dead while the corpse was being waked and I was told that that was their meaning." Another contended, "No; they are not English; they are the initials of the Latin sentence 'Jesus Hominis Salvator'—Jesus Savior of Mankind." Hereupon a lithe-formed, bright-eyed classmate entered; he was appealed to and confidently waved aside all difficulties, saying, "Those are the letters from the banner of the emperor Constantine, 'In Hoc Signo—In This Sign Thou Shalt Conquer.' Just like 'A E F' meant 'American Expeditionary Force' or 'Y M C A' meant 'You Must Come Across.' My parents learned that in Poland and taught it to me when I was a boy."

That these young men were all wrong and altogether wrong in their explanation of the history and meaning of these sacred letters is true. But the incident teaches two useful things:—the prevalent ignorance of these familiar letters on the one hand and on the other the fanciful meanings which have been given to them by different peoples. As the XPI so the IHS has but the haziest and most varied meanings to the multitude.

These letters are parallels again in this:—they both signify the same thing and that is the Sacred name of Our Lord—Jesus Christ. As we have seen the XPI is an archaic made up of the first three letters of His name in Greek, so the IHS is a similar devisement composed of the first three letters of His name in that same tongue; so that IHS XPI are the Greek abbreviations of His sacred name—Jesus Christ. Finally these two signets are parallels because they are ancient, venerable and pregnant

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christian symbols which carried to the minds and hearts of our wonderful ancestors in the faith all the meaning and inspiration which that sweetest of all names brings of suffering and of love divine, and thus folded about with aged wisdom and veneration they have been inherited by us, the Catholics of today. They are tokens of the wisdom and power of Jesus Christ.

It is because of this sublime meaning of the archaism IHS XPI that it appealed so strongly to the apostolic spirit of the saints, and such men as St. Bernard held the IHS before the eyes of the people in his day; St. Vincent Ferrer, St. John Capistran and St. Bernardine of Siena preached the wisdom and the power of that holy sign, holding it up before the eyes of the people, and so made it the instrument whereby they converted as many as thousands by one sermon. The grace of Jesus Christ fell upon the efforts of those earnest men and in that sign they conquered, in very deed, miles and men in multitudes. They resurrected the IHS from the ages and as an evidence of the deep impression which it made on the minds of the nations we have the IHS stamped all over the western church—on our windows, our altars, our vestments, our tabernacles; it is even stamped on the very hosts which the priest consecrates at the Mass. It is fittingly the seal of the Jesuits and the standard of the Holy Name Society.

These two Greek tokens, the IHS and the XPI, reach back to the earliest days and in this connection it is interesting to note that while the IHS is by far the more familiar today the XPI was the more attractive in the days gone by. It is everywhere in evidence and in the most ingenious varieties of figure not merely in the sequence of lettering but in a multiplicity of weavings that make up the monogram. It is a matter of edifying interest to know that the interturnings of the letters XPI is the most ancient form of monogram known to

history; it is the original, the inspiration, the protoparent of all monograms whether sacred or profane, so that a very common and quite proper name for this epigraph is the "monogram" and so has it been called.

WHEN we came to inquire why the chrismon appealed more strongly to the first christians than did its holy brother the IHS we meet the magnificent inspiration for which we are seeking. The determining factor was devotion to Christ Crucified. The pious hearts of those much-tried predecessors in the faith were ever eager for the sign of the cross and their eyes were always alert to its presence. In the IHS it is not readily perceptible, whereas there it stood bold, strongly defined in the first letter that met their eyes in the XPI. It was the sign of the cross, the chrismon, the sign of Christ, indeed, and they took it to their hearts with holy satisfaction. They took that beloved sign to their hearts in the literal, in the most touching sense of those pathetic words and they made of it a holy talisman. They traced that epigraphic mark on parchment, they cut it into stone, they carved it on wood, they moulded it into medals so that they might the better carry it with them constantly. And those early lovers of the cross could indulge at their pleasure this desire to carry with them that sacred device; they might carry it publicly, they might carry it covertly without fear of detection or suspicion. Why? Because the practice of wearing philacteries by the Jews and charms by the heathen populace was general; it was as common and indifferent as the watch-charm, the dress-ring, the locket or the lavalliere is amongst the men and women of today. These fervent souls took advantage of this chance condition and contrived an unknown number of ways by which they might carry constantly with them the beloved cross innocently yet plainly visible in that mysterious amulet, the chrismon, the XPI.

An Unparalleled Photograph

THIS is a remarkable picture. It shows Dr. Michael Possenti of Camerino, Italy, aged eighty seven years, placing at the foot of the statue of a saint a white rose. The statue is that of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin. The picture is remarkable, because he to whom the rose is offered, and he who offers it are brothers,—Francis Possenti, now St. Gabriel of the Church Triumphant, whose feast falls on February 27th, and Michael Possenti, of the Church Militant. The picture is remarkable, because it presents a scene unique, perhaps, in the history of the Church. A brother still in the flesh pays veneration and homage to one of his own blood now glorified in heaven. Flesh is united with spirit, earth with heaven, mortality with immortality, in a communion which only those can appreciate who are blessed with the divine gift of faith.

Michael Possenti, the sixth son of Sante Possenti and Agnes Frisciotti, is their ninth child. His brother Francis, (St. Gabriel,) was the eighth son and the eleventh child, three years younger than Michael. The latter is the only surviving member of a family of thirteen children. It was his singular privilege to have been present at the beatification and canonization of his young brother Francis. His

venerable appearance and the youthfulness of St. Gabriel, who died when but twenty four years old, are in striking contrast. It but typifies the difference between the two stages in which the brothers now exist,—the Saint in the region of perpetual youth and eternal rest, the aged brother still in a land where everything changes and grows old.

This picture also brings most vividly before us a vital truth. It visualizes the holiness of the Church. In every age holy men and women have been born to her, who is the Mother of Saints. Even in this so called cultured and materialistic age, she still gives birth to those who practice in an heroic manner the christian virtues, and whom she crowns with the aureole of sainthood.

Brother Sylvester, who was a novice with the Saint, was present at his canonization and is still alive. Gabriel

was born later than Cardinal Gibbons, died a few years before the latter was made bishop, and beatified and crowned a saint before that illustrious prelate's death. Churchmen are living today, who, were St. Gabriel still on earth, would be his seniors. There is a Passionist brother, who was born before St. Gabriel and is at present residing in St. Paul's Monastery, Pittsburg., Pa.



MICHAEL POSSENTI PAYS REVERENCE TO HIS BROTHER ST. GABRIEL

What Do You Know About:

Christian Science?

CHRISTIAN Science still lives and it is still a power. Mark Twain wrote a book on Christian Science; he could have set the world roaring with laughter with this burlesque of religion for a subject but for the most part he wrote a serious attack on its tenets. He realized that even he could not ridicule Christian Science out of existence.

Dooley's famous jest on the cult did not succeed in demolishing it, yet we have Mr. Wilson's dictum that the only man in the country he feared was Mr. Dooley.

Everyone would know, we think, that Christian Science is a travesty on both Christianity and medical science, but a journey through the country would reveal to us that Christian Science temples are among the most striking edifices we meet with. Moreover while the other Non-Catholic services are not frequented, those of Christian Science are growing in popularity.

It is neither Christian nor Scientific. Yet the followers of this cult issue a Daily which ranks in importance with the major newspapers of the country. (Shame on us Catholics who are still far from such an achievement!) They have the "Christian Science Monitor."

How do we account for Christian Science?

We must allow Mrs. Eddy the credit of genius in the art of imposture.

The beginnings of Christian Science are traceable to a visit which Mrs. Eddy paid to a so-called "Doctor" Quimby. While trafficking in Spiritism and Mesmerism he became aware of the well-known truth that Will Power is a big factor in the matter of good and bad health. He succeeded in invoking in her the "will to be well," and from that moment she ceased "enjoying bad health." Here was her opportunity. She quite liberally stole his "Science" which he named "Christian," adulterated it further by plagiarizing from the old Gnostics, put a new label over all and called it "Science and Health."

The power of the will is not confined only to the removing of imaginary ills. Dr. James J. Walsh says: "The will is the most active therapeutic agency that we have. It can do more to prevent, to relieve and even to cure human ailments than

any other. The many remedies that have been successfully used on mankind have merely acted as mental releases of energies towards recovery." ("Studies," March 1921). They really acted on the will.

This will explain why the "sure cures" of the past fail to cure now. It was the belief, not the concoction that cured—cured oftentimes in spite of the positive harm the concoction wrought in the patient.

Mrs. Eddy used "Faith" or religion as the agent to stimulate suggestion so as to bring into play purely natural curative powers. Suggestion becomes religion. And behold! Mrs. Eddy becomes a prophetess!

Suggestion goes so far and no further; it cannot thrust aside, for instance, the reality of broken bones. How does she meet the difficulty? She audaciously tells us there are no broken bones because there are no bones to break. We have no such things as bodies. We are Divine, but we think we have such ills because the Divine Mind in us is not yet in supreme control; mortal mind has still the upper hand.

The reason why those who are duped are numbered by the thousands is simple. Owing no allegiance to any definite creed the suffering multitude has been beguiled into this sect because it holds out the hope of healing their bodily ills. They will gulp down almost any absurdity for that. Take away that element of healing, (and where it is genuine it is purely a natural process used by every reputable medical man and institution) from the hodge-podge of their religious teaching and no one would be attracted to or held by the ravings which Mrs. Eddy calls Christianity.

Everyone may, often should, use Will Power to the full to cast off ailments of body as well as of mind. Physicians concur in the verdict that for far the greater number of diseases, 'Will is the only healer we can or need to bring in.

'Faith Cures' stop not here for the Catholic. When his infirmities are beyond all material help, trustingly he may turn to prayer to set in motion the power of Him, who healed the sick and the infirm.

Archconfraternity of



the Sacred Passion

Mission of the Society

WHEN a number of people are deeply interested in a cause, what more natural than to unite their efforts in support of it.

So they start an organization; and then go forth to do all they can to carry the enterprize through. This activity may be understood as the mission of the members. It is the actual working out of the aims of the society. It is something quite different from mere membership in the society.

Many instances during the world war and since illustrate well how interested and enthusiastic people can become in making some favorite affair a success. Propaganda, a familiar term today, signifies the effort of a particular group of men to mould public opinion in a way favorable to them and their plans. It is known as a drive, when the aim is increase of membership or of subscribers. Thus the many drives to sell government bonds, or to raise funds for divers charities.

In such campaigns, every means is adopted that can in the least way promise results: parades and mass meetings, press notices and magazine articles, advertising and electric signs, publication of the names of supporters, sale of seals and buttons, canvassing from house to house as well as in railway stations, in crowded thoroughfares, and in public buildings. No opportunity is let slip in the pursuit for success.

The mission of the Archconfraternity of the Passion, unlike the so called propaganda drive, is not limited as regards either time or place, but it does resemble the drive in earnestness and zeal. The members of the Archconfraternity strive daily to inflame their hearts with true love for Christ Crucified, and moreover try to the utmost of their ability to draw the attention of others to the Cross and Passion of Our Lord. But they seek the approval and aid of devout Catholics only; and hence, they do not imitate the sensational methods of secular associations. Like the latter, however, they seize all possible ways open to them for

advancing their sacred cause, a grateful devotion to the Passion.

What principally distinguishes the Archconfraternity of the Passion from other societies is the excellence of its special mission. The sodalists of the Passion are concerned not only in a personal knowledge of the mystery of Christ's sufferings and death, a mystery which holds a foremost place in our holy religion, but likewise in the worldwide diffusion of this knowledge.

The Catholic Faith holds up the Sacred Passion as a truth, so strange, so stupendous, so significant, that no human being can deem its study uninteresting or unimportant. Other events, it is true, have effected radical changes in the world's checkered history, but none have been foretold and prefigured, remembered and repeated, with the persistence of the last days of Christ during which He redeemed mankind. In this sublime event there is revealed to men the malice of sin and the beauty of virtue, the love of our Heavenly Father and the ingratitude of His creatures, the inestimable value of eternal life and the terrible punishment of hell. The Passion of Our Lord is a summary of His teaching, the "example" as St. Peter tells us, for every soul to follow, the supreme sacrifice, which gives to the Christian religion all its wisdom and its power.

Surely then there is no nobler study than the acquiring of a profounder knowledge of the Cross and Passion; there is no grander service to the neighbor than proclaiming by prayer and word and example that "Christ died for all men;" there is no labor more fruitful in good results than persuading mankind to take up the cross daily and to walk in the footsteps of Christ Crucified. Such is the mission of the Archconfraternity of the Passion.

THE excellence of this mission of the members of the Archconfraternity is further emphasized by the prominence, which the Church gives to the Sacred Passion throughout her liturgy.

THE † SIGN

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, her chief act of worship, is identical with the Sacrifice of the Cross. The Most Blessed Eucharist, her greatest treasure, is the abiding Memorial of the Passion. The Sacraments are the channels through which the infinite merits of our Divine Redeemer's Precious Blood flow directly into every soul. The Sign of the Cross she uses frequently in her ceremonies, places above every church and chapel, displays on all her vestments and in all her books. Every altar must have its crucifix. The devotion most favored with indulgences is the Way of the Cross. She commands every Friday to be observed by abstinence from meat in memory of Our Savior's sufferings and death; the season of Lent and especially Holy Week is appointed for special remembrance of the Sacred Passion.

The members of the Archconfraternity therefore are corresponding to the Church's own ideal in thus earnestly striving to keep the Passion ever before their eyes, and in attempting to be so animated by the thought of it that everywhere they may spread its benign influence.

The example of our Divine Savior Himself also bespeaks the excellence of this mission. After His Resurrection, the first among men to behold the Redeemer's Glorious Presence were those who had taken a close part in His bitter Passion. Thus, numbered among these privileged souls were His Blessed Mother Mary, who had stood beneath His Cross; the Apostles, St. Peter, St. John, and St. James, who had been with Him in the garden at Gethsemane, and had followed Him at least as far as the High Priest's court; St. Mary Magdalen and the holy women, who had come from Galilee, and who had remained near Him on Calvary.

When Jesus walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He showed them how the Scriptures had been fulfilled in the Savior's sufferings and death. And when the Master came to the Apostles in the upper room, He pointed out to them the Wounds in His hands and side. Later, He bade the unbelieving Apostle, St. Thomas, to put his finger into these same Wounds, and to place his hand into His riven Side.

This especial interest of Christ Jesus in preaching His Passion after His Resurrection is the self-same mission, which the members of the Archconfraternity are asked to carry on. Like the Divine Master, they should endeavor to keep alive the memory of the Sacred Passion in their own hearts,

and when opportunity offers, to seize it to make the Passion better known to others.

In the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles, the Passion of Our Lord is set forth as of paramount importance. When condemned and persecuted, the Apostles rejoiced to be accounted worthy to suffer for their Leader, Christ Crucified.

SEVERAL years ago, a celebrated artist devoted much time to painting scenes of the Sacred Passion. While he represented our Divine Savior as He is traditionally depicted in such paintings, he gave the persons surrounding Him the dress and appearance of people in modern times. In the throng passing by the figure of the Crucified, he pictured the wealthy with their jewels and fine clothes, the poor in garments faded and torn, the old man tottering and groping for his way, the little child, through fear, clinging to his mother's dress, the merchant alert and intent on the business of the moment, the laborer wearily trudging along, the bold youth thoughtless and brimming with laughter, the vain young girl self-willed and pleasure bent, the healthy, the afflicted, the educated, and the ignorant; every class and condition of the human race had its counterpart in these scenes. If any seemed to notice the suffering Lover of their souls, it was a glance of distant pity or an angry look of scorn. For one among this drifting motley crowd, who offered sympathy, there were many who shook their fists at Him or reached down for a stone.

These pictures express a sad truth, that few at the present day think seriously on the Passion of Christ. The greater part of men despise the Cross, which stands for self-control and self-sacrifice. They give their every thought to their money bags, to the latest fashions, to novel amusements, to personal advancement, to self-indulgence, to anything rather than to treading the painful blood-stained road to Calvary.

If the members of the Archconfraternity of the Passion go forth with fervent prayer and ardent zeal, mindful of the strength of the Cross and Passion, holding up like the Church this mystery before men at all times, buoyed up by remembrance of the example of Our Lord Himself, they will convert the world, and bring men, women, and children to attend and see that there is no sorrow like unto His sorrow, to behold with grateful loving hearts how much Christ Crucified loves them.

Index to Worthwhile Reading

AN EPITOME OF PRIESTLY LIFE. By Canon Arvisenet. Benziger Bros. New York. Price \$2.50.

This is an adaptation of the venerable 'Memorial Vitae Sacerdotis'. Like in style and spirit to the Imitation, it is a book that eventually finds its way to a priest's pridieu. The book though not promising all the claims of the Imitation of Christ to perpetuity, yet in great measure has a singular worth. The Publishers have chosen a style of 'make-up' which makes it peculiarly well adapted to serve as a gift book. As a festal gift to a clerical friend or as an ordination present to the newly anointed priest, this edition is sure to be in constant demand. In putting this publication on the market the Publishers had this in mind and have succeeded in producing a book which in every way is well suited to fulfill their expectations.

AMERICAN CATHOLICS IN THE WORLD WAR. By Michael Williams. Macmillan Co., New York. Price \$2.50.

Mr. Michael Williams, one of the leading journalists of the day, has decided to serve the Church through the Press. He uses his fine talent and tireless energy to good advantage in this very important book, "The American Catholic in the War." The author gives us two valuable installments of a history of Catholic Patriotism over and above what he contracts for by the title of the present book. The first five chapters give a survey of the history of Catholic Americans from the beginnings of the Republic to the days of America's entrance into the World War. Succinctly yet with completeness, we are supplied with the historical justification of Catholic claims which were set forth anew in the Bishops' "Pledge of the Catholic Church" to the President after the War Manifesto of April 6, 1917. "Standing firmly upon our solid Catholic tradition and history from the very foundation of this nation, we affirm in this hour of stress and trial our most sacred and sincere loyalty and patriotism toward our country, our government and our flag."

The middle section of the book deals with American Catholics in the War. Herein is set forth how the pledge was fulfilled. We all have more or less definite ideas that the services rendered to the country by the participation of Catholics in the War were on a colossal scale. The number mustered into service, it is practically certain, Mr. Williams tells us in a footnote, was 1,000,000. The book deals

not so much in statistics but rather aims at setting forth the action that the Church took in answer to the demand made upon her. The magnitude of the country's task and the variety of the needs that would arise from the multitude of the Church's children in the war service readily gives one an idea of what the demands were. Her activities were stupendous. The response she made to the call is now history. Mr. Williams has seen to it that the memory of it shall not fade and be lost to posterity. No Catholic should be ignorant of what American Catholics did in the War.

The last section of the book tells of the activities of the Catholic Church to help in the work of reconstruction. Reconstruction is a need that stretches out far beyond the ruins which the War caused. There are the evils 'that are always with us' which are fastened on the very heart of Social life; evils which must account for the dreadful War that even now is not at an end; but alas evils that could not and were not removed by the War. Mr. Williams explains how the Church having developed marvellous efficiency for action during the War, how she wielded many and wonderful agencies for good has resolved to hold to these gains and use her organized strength to continue fighting the evils which are working to undermine the very foundations of Society.

The National Catholic War Council is now The National Catholic Welfare Council. We have here an account of what the N. C. W. C. is, and what it plans to do. The organization is the creation of the Catholic Hierarchy. The United and official action of the Catholic Church in America, will herewith function through the N. C. W. C.

We are pleased to promise our readers two articles specially devoted to the meaning and work of the N. C. W. C. by Mr. Michael Williams and Mr. Charles A. McMahon.

THE LIGHT ON THE LAGOON. By Isabel C. Clarke. Benziger Bros. New York. Price \$2.00.

This is a story of strong love, high romance and conflicting emotions. Its principal scenes are laid in the city of Venice. It is the revelation of the Kindly Light which always shines for the humble in heart who seek truth in sincerity of purpose. The reader will find in this great work of Miss Clarke all the literary grace, descriptive power and interesting action which have uniformly characterized her large output of fiction.

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